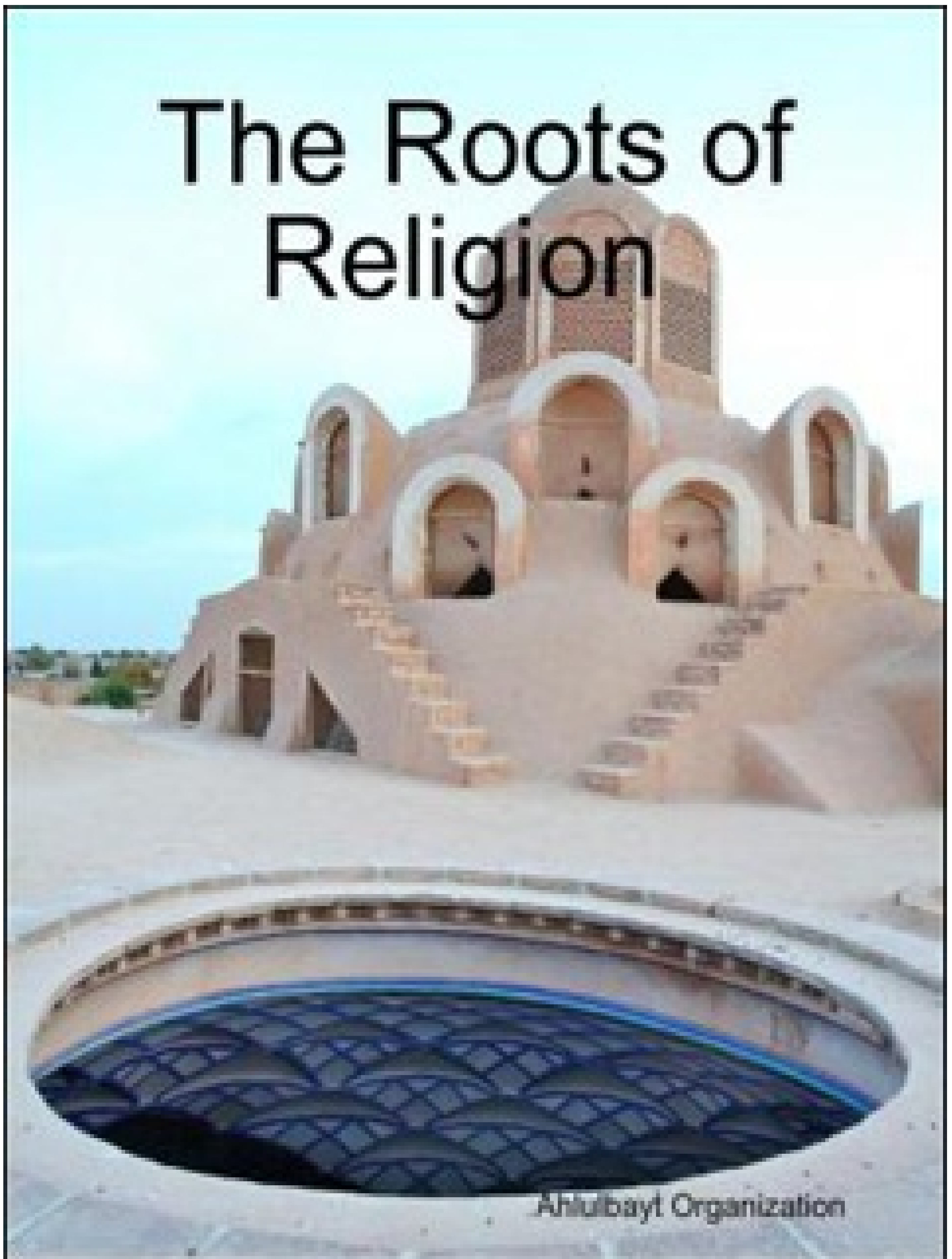

The Roots of Religion
Ahlulbayt Organization

بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم

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Introduction

Contrary to what some people say, that ideological matters do not have any effect on human life, we think that these are matters which form our way of living and lead it .accordingly to our ideas and beliefs

Someone who does not believe in the Source of the Universe, the God of the Worlds and in Resurrection and the Day of Judgement will not have any relation with God, nor can he open an account in the Next World to derive the benefits of his deeds. He will find himself without any obligation and will do such things which a man believing in God and the Next World would never do. He won't be related to God and he will be indifferent to God's guidance or the guides who have come from Him to human .beings

Even the social relations of man are linked to ideological matters. Someone who believes in God and the Day of Judgement won't indulge in crimes, cheating, unjust .dealings, oppression and exploitation of others

Because of the deep relation between ideological matters and human life, it is necessary for everyone to study them

In order to place at the disposal of our sisters and brothers who are seekers of the Truth, we

have prepared a set of thirty lessons in which such ideological matters and these .issues have been propounded and solved in a simple and concise way

This text can also be used as text book in religious classes for youngsters. We hope .you will find it beneficial and effective

.Any questions and comment to improve these lessons will be welcomed

.May Allah help all the seekers of Truth and reality

English Department of Dar Rah e-Haq

,Rabi'al-Awwal, ۱۴۰۲

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?Lesson ۱: Why Religion

point

We shall (continue to) show them evidence of Our existence in the world and within their souls until it becomes clear that the Qur'an is the truth. Is it not sufficient for you .(that your Lord witnesses all things? (۴۱:۵۳

They are certainly doubtful about their meeting with their Lord. God indeed .(encompasses all things (۴۱:۵۴

There are some people who maintain that they have no obligation to investigate and find out if it is necessary to learn about religion. They think that there is no reason and ?need to make them consider religion

The following explanations will demonstrate in two ways the necessity and need of .inquiry into religion

Wisdom dictates that every man should give thanks for those benefits, which he has .received

Wisdom also dictates that he acknowledge the need to prevent every kind of possible .danger or harm

.Let us consider each of these two points

We gave wisdom to Luqman so that he would give thanks to God. Those who give thanks to God do so for their own good. Those who are ungrateful should know

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.(that God is Self-sufficient and Praiseworthy (٣١:١٢

The Obligation of Thanksgiving

It is our good fortune to benefit from and the excellencies of life in this world: Consider how our digestive system, respiratory apparatus, the heart and other organs of the body work. Each one of these is in its turn greater than the limit of our knowledge and even our imagination. Likewise the light of the sun, the existence of plants, the mines and resources hidden deep in the heart of the earth; all of them are great benefits .which, by the knowledge and power that has been given to him, man can make use of

Greater than all of these, however is the genius and understanding of man himself, which can break a mighty mountain into pieces and create from water and iron the .most enormous power and the most delicate objects

Now this question poses itself: Should we not engage ourselves in research and inquiry until, if there is a benefactor, we acknowledge that benefactor, so as to fulfil ?our duty and offer him our thanks

Suppose a benevolent and charitable man adopts a baby who has lost his father and mother, and provides for him every kind of sustenance for life and growth. He arranges for the child to be brought up, and when he is ready for education provides him with the best teachers and books. Similarly he places every possible facility within his reach, and, in short, provides in every way for his welfare. Does this child not then have an obligation

to try to find out first who this man is, and secondly, about his great generosity, his whole soul overflowing with thanks for his benefactor?

It is the same in the field of existence, and we are obliged to engage in inquiry till we acknowledge the existence of the Benefactor and Creator Himself and render our thanks.

Making efforts to acquire the true religion is also a command of wisdom. He who has not yet found the right way, and is wandering without direction must not rest his feet until he has found the way of Truth and the true religion, satisfied by enlightening proofs and clear evidence. And when he has reached the source of spiritual life and the true religion, his heart full of peace and rejoicing, he should begin to give his thanks to the Creator Himself.

Believers, save yourselves and your families from the fire, wherein people and stones used as fuel and is guarded by stern angels who do not disobey God's commands and do whatever they are ordered to do (۶۶:۶).

The Prevention of Possible Danger and Harm

If a child were to come and tell you that he saw a poisonous snake. Also if he saw it go into the room you were in, you would immediately jump up from where you were and undertake a thorough search of every nook and cranny until you found it, or were satisfied that it was not there

Similarly, if, while travelling by night in a dangerous country, you learnt that bandits were waiting on the road ahead

to ambush you, without doubt you would wait until the way ahead was clear of danger, and would not take a single step forward until then.

In these two examples it has been made clear that we are compelled by reason to

investigate conceivable dangers. It is possible that some of the harmful things may turn out to be nothing at all, and other people may not pay any attention to them, but if an injury carries the price of a human soul, and a life is destroyed, it cannot be .ignored

The Most Dangerous Harm

In the history of mankind, we learn of people who were famous for telling the truth and acting honestly. They claimed that they were messengers of God, and they called people to have faith in God and to act in a certain way. As a result of the efforts and the persistent sufferings of these special people in all corners of the world, many groups had faith in them. Thus the birth of Jesus became the beginning of the Christian calendar and the migration of the Prophet Muhammad started the Muslim .calendar

Now, we see that these messengers attracted men to religion and to follow particular rules, caused them to fear punishment for their bad deeds and made them sure that they would be tried in the Great Court of Justice before the Righteous and Wise Judge. They trembled at the hardships and perils of Resurrection and the harshness of the punishment there, and made men fearful of these things. The

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question is, do their warnings make us realize the possibility of harm and danger in ?the same way as did the warning of the small child

Is it right that we should ignore the words and deeds of the real religious people of this world, when it is they who, in their belief and faith stood watch over the soul, and ?spared themselves no kind of sacrifice

Clearly, the words of the messengers, if they do not make a man certain, at least provoke him to think; perhaps what they say is true. Then what in fact is our duty, if it is correct that the messengers tell the truth? What answer will we give in the Court of ?Justice of God

Here reason reckons the necessity of preventing this "at least possible" harm, and .religion urges us to follow

What is more, these messengers call man to a healthy and civilized life. They also say that after death an extensive new world and everlasting blessings await one who has performed his duty, and give glad tidings that in that place is another existence overflowing with peace of mind and certainty of spirit, where there is no disease, distress, agitation, anguish or fear. Does reason allow us to ignore this important ?message

Must we not give weight to the fears and threats of the messengers, who say that sins and transgression have their penalty, and follow religion and give our thought to ?it

:The main points

To those who have said, "God is our Lord," and who

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,have remained steadfast to their belief, the angels will descend saying

Do not be afraid or grieved. Receive the glad news of the Paradise, which was" .(promised to you (۴۱:۳۰

We are your guardians in this world and in the life to come, where you will have (whatever you call for, (۴۱:۳۱

.(a hospitable welcome from the All-forgiving and All-merciful God." (۴۱:۳۲...

a. It is necessary to acknowledge the existence of a benefactor. Allah, God is the .greatest benefactor

b. It is necessary to seek protection against a danger that may befall one. Allah, God is .the greatest protector

Questions

۱. What kind of people does not like thinking about religion?

۲. What does the obligation of Thanksgiving prove?

۳. What is the value of the different parts of our body?

۴. What should be our attitude to someone who does us favors?

۵. What should be our attitude to one whom made all these good things for our body and all natural resources for our benefits?

۶. What is the greatest of all these favors and why?

۷. After considering all these, what questions do arise?

۸. Is the case of our creation similar to bringing up an orphan baby and educating the same?

۹. What would be the obligation of such a baby after growing up?

۱۰. Do we need to learn about our creator and why?

۱۱. What would wisdom require us to do in this matter?

۱۲. Is prevention of possible danger necessary?

۱۳. What would we do if a child said that a poisonous snake is approaching?

۱۴. What would one do

after learning bandits have blocked the road what would you do?

۱۵. What compels us to investigate in both snake and bandit cases?

۱۶. What is the most dangerous harm for man?

۱۷. What kind of people were the Prophets?

To whose warning should we pay much attention, to the warning of the snake and .۱۸ ?bandits or to the warnings of the Prophets

?Is it right to ignore what religious peoples concern about .۱۹

?If the warnings of the messengers are true, what is our duty .۲۰

?Where can man find true peace, happiness and everlasting comfort .۲۱

?Can you think of some other evidence of the existence of God .۲۲

?What do verses ۵۳-۵۴:۴۱ say .۲۳

?What does verse ۱۲:۳۱ say .۲۴

?What does verse ۶:۶۶ say .۲۵

?What do verses ۳۰-۳۲:۴۱ say .۲۶

Translation of two Hadith, reports about the two very heavy matters that the holy prophet of Islam just before leaving this world said he will leave behind for the :guidance of his followers

Muslim (the author of Sahih of Muslim) has said, " Zuhayr Ibn harb and Shuja' Ibn (۱ Mukhallad both reported through certain narrators who reported from Zayd Ibn Arqam who said, "One day Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) addressed us at the oasis called Khumm, which is located between Mecca and Madina. The holy Prophet after praising Allah and mentioning His glories preached and reminded people of their duties. He then said, "O people I am only a mortal thus, perhaps the messenger of my Lord will call me soon and I shall then

.have to accept and follow his call while I will be leaving among you two heavy matters

a) The first of the two is the book of Allah in which there is guidance and light. You must hold firmly the book of Allah and hold it is as (Authentic source of) guidance. He

exhorted people about the book of Allah and spoke about the attractive matters of .the holy book

b) Then he said, "Another heavy matter is my Ahlul Bayt (my family). I remind you of Allah in the matters of my Ahlul Bayt. I remind you of Allah in the matters of my Ahlul .Bayt. I remind you of Allah in the matters of my Ahlul Bayt

Husayn asked Zayd, " Who are of his Ahlul Bayt (family), Zayd? Are his wives of his family? He Zayd said, "His wives are of his family but of his Ahlul Bayt are those to who alms is prohibited to use after him. He said, "They are the family of Ali, the family 'aqil, the family of ja'far and the family of Abbass. He said to all of these people the use of ".alms is prohibited

Muslims has said, "Abu Bakr Ibn Abi Shaybah and Muhammad Ibn Abdullah Ibn (۲ Nummayr (in the words of Abi Bakr) has reported through a chain of narrators from 'a'ishah who said, "One morning the holy Prophet came out with a murahhal (printed .material) gown made of black wool

Then Hasan (one of his grandsons) came and took him

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inside the gown. After him his grandson Husayn came. He took him inside the gown. Then Fatimah (his daughter) came. He took her inside the gown. Then Ali came. He ,took him inside the gown. Then the holy Prophet said

People of the house, God wants to remove all kinds of uncleanness from you and to" ."(purify you thoroughly. (۳۳:۳۳

Lesson ۲: Experiment beyond the physical senses

point

Whenever we see a beautiful building of great splendour and design, we can easily understand that its architect, master builder and mason was each one an expert in his own craft, and we discover, from observing such a well-proportioned building, the

.knowledge and science of its builder

Similarly, by looking at a car, an airplane, a computer or any other well-designed artifact, we are invariably guided to well-informed and knowledgeable inventors, discoverers and manufacturers, and we are made aware of their skill and learning. In none of these instances it is necessary to actually see the constructor of the building or other factor with our own eyes to testify to his existence. What is more, when observing all these things, it is not with any of our external senses that we perceive .his knowledge and skill

But, nevertheless, we believe in his science and knowledge. Why do we come up with such belief? Because that same orderliness which we perceived in the artifacts, forces us to recognize the knowledge of their constructors. And from this we reach to the conclusion that it, in no case, is necessary that something for

.whose existence we find enough evidence should be visible or tangible

How many facts are there which are not perceptible to our external senses, but we through paying care and attention to the effects they produce become aware of their existence. For every wise man understands, without exercising too much attention, that there can be no effect without a cause, nothing orderly without wise and .knowledgeable designer

:With a view to this fact we can divide the creatures in this world into two categories

١. There are things, which are evident to one or more of the five senses. We observe visible things with the eyes, we hear sounds with the ears, and we become aware of pleasant and unpleasant smells, bitter and sweet tastes, hot and cold, rough and .smooth by our nose, our tongue, and the skin of our body

٢. There are other things which are not perceived by any one of the five senses, but whose existence we can deduce by considering their effects. These facts are not all of one kind, some are material and some are non-material (i.e., they are without

.material limits or properties). In the following a few of them are mentioned

a. One example is electricity. We can never, merely by looking at two wires, one of which is electrified, determine which of them has an electric current. We can only discover the existence of this current from the effect of the electricity, e.g. a lamp being lit. Electricity is something, which exists although our

.eyes cannot, directly, see it

b. Another example is gravitation. If you let go off the book, which you now have in your hand, it will fall to the ground, i.e. the ground will pull the book towards itself. This power is something, which we do not directly perceive through our senses. Gravitation is again one of those things which is not visible, but of whose existence we .feel sure through observing the falling of bodies - which is its result

c. One more example is magnetism. We place a magnet beside a piece of iron. Externally there is nothing except what we see, but when the iron is pulled towards the magnet we understand that in the space around the magnet the phenomenon of .magnetism exists

d. Invisible radiation is another case. If we shine white sunlight through a prism we see on the other side of the crystal six colors (the spectrum), which are: red, orange, yellow, green, blue and violet. On this side of red and beyond violet no more colors are visible. However scientists have discovered that in the place where the eyes see no more light, further 'colors' exist which have heating and chemical properties. These .'lights' are called infrared and ultra-violet

In the year ۱۸۰۰ AD. a physicist and astronomer called Herschel thought of the idea of researching into whether radiation existed beyond what the eye can see. He gradually altered the position of a thermometer placed on a screen on which the six-coloured spectrum (from red to

violet) was projected, and exposed it to the various colours, measuring the heating effect of each of them. When he got beyond the red, he discovered that the thermometer indicated greater heat from this. He then became certain of the existence of invisible radiation - called infrared radiation - which produced more heat than visible light, and this same heat, which is a result of the radiation, convinced .people of the existence of infrared radiation

At the same time, another scientist called Wollaston placed a quantity of the chemical compound silver chloride beyond the violet end of the spectrum. Contrary to his expectation, he discovered that in the place where light did not reach the eye there was a factor, which caused the silver chloride to darken. Later still, scientists found out that the changing of the colour of the skin on exposure to sunlight was due to the .chemical influence of this radiation

It thus became certain that beyond violet light there was another radiation, which .was invisible, and it was named ultra-violet

e. One more example is inaudible sounds. There are many sounds, which we do not hear. These are called supersonic sounds, and we discover their existence by .examining their effects; they are used in medicine and technology

f. Intelligence is another case of such nature. All of us are aware of ourselves, i.e. we perceive that we exist, and we can also arrive at concepts in a gradual manner concerning matters outside ourselves which we explain by this kind of

:statement

'.I solved the most difficult mathematical problem'

I pondered a lot over such-and-such a theory until I came to the conclusion that it' '.was correct

Also, man is aware of his own knowledge, i.e. he knows that he knows. Intelligence is

not something visible or audible in the sense that man can see it with his eyes or hear it with his ears, but in fact, although it is intangible, everyone finds it in himself in addition to the powers of sight and hearing and the other external faculties. Other people cannot learn about my intelligence through the five senses. Instead they must deduce its existence from the effects it produces. For example, when a scientist is expounding on a problem, it becomes clear that he has understood it. Also, if we ask a scientist if he is familiar with mathematical problems or not, and he says that he is informed about them, we understand that he is aware of his own understanding and knowledge, i.e. he knows that he understands the problems of mathematics.(۱)

The Constructs of the Mind

People can construct in their own minds any form that they wish. For example they can build a tower similar to the Eiffel tower whose construction in the-external world required many years, a thousand sorts of different building materials and substances, and hundreds of workers: this can be built in the mind in an instant.

Maybe thousands of similar ones can be built, and it is possible to imagine in the mind things, which have no existence in

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۱- Understanding Light by Tanonbaum, Spillman.

the outside world at all. We may create a monster with many heads, hands and feet. It is clear that others cannot be informed directly of the creations of our minds, because they are not visible and audible, but they can discover their existence from their consequences or from our speech.

g. Consider love, hate and determination. Everyone has, on the one hand, a liking for some things and, on the other hand, an aversion to other things. Also, throughout his life he is in need of determination. For every task that he likes to do he determines to accomplish it and for every task that he does not like to do he leaves it on one side and determines not to do it.

No-one can understand directly the determinations of someone else and what he likes and what he does not like, unless from the effects and reactions to it, because love, hate and determination are not visible, audible or tangible things which can be .perceived through the external senses

h. Consider life. A fine chicken, moving towards the water, falls into a pond, and, before we can rescue it, it dies. In the organization of the life of this animal at this very moment, what change has taken place, and between its present condition and one moment before when it had been alive, what difference is there that it no longer ?moves, plays or eats

We must of necessity say that there is something, which exists, in the live chicken, which does

not exist in the dead chicken. Life is not an object of the senses. We only perceive the effects of it, which are movement, feeding, etc., and from these effects we discover .its existence

The established scientific facts mentioned above make it thoroughly clear that over and above the beings, which we perceive with our sensory organs, there are also things which we do not directly perceive, but which we know about only because of .the effects they produce

Thus we draw the conclusion that it is not right for us to reject something, which we do not see only because it is not visible. Being invisible is different from not existing, and the way of discovering something is not confined to the eyes or other external senses. Reason can discover some of the things by means of the effects of those things, as we saw in the case of the existence of scientific facts that are known .through their results, and which are not denied or doubted by any competent person

This is not to say that God is similar to these facts. Because God is a truth higher than these, to which nothing is equal or comparable but it is to say that in the same way as

we discover the existence of these things through their effects, we can discover the .existence of God through His signs

Thus those who observe only with their physical eyes, and deny the existence of God because they cannot see Him with these eyes, are

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blind as far as their eye of wisdom and contemplation is concerned. Since we know, by the dictates of wisdom, through the precise regulation of creation – which is one of the .signs of God – that His existence can be discovered

To these people perhaps the poet says, "Open thy heart's eye your soul to see, and ".what is invisible will be manifest to thee

.In every creature there is the evidence of the existence of God

A more precise point and a more important matter is that a study of the results of the Power of the Lord, in addition to that which guides us to His existence, demonstrates that since the entire world and all creatures are signs of Him, His sign is not confined to one special instance or locality. All and every phenomenon is one of His signs. He Himself is another reality to which none of the creatures of the world are equal or comparable. He is an unlimited being who possess all perfection and is free from all .imperfections

:We therefore discover two things from the study of the signs of God

۱. The existence of the Creator of the universe, in which all things are His signs

۲. That because His signs are without limit and are not specific to one time or place he is a Being unlimited and possessing every perfection, although we cannot perceive His .reality

Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah Khorasani, the servant of the eighth Imam (A.S.) said: A group of men were sitting with Imam

Rida (A.S.) when one of those who died the existence of God came in. The Imam (A S.) said to him: 'If, as you say, there is no God, no Messenger, no Reckoning and no Book of records (which there surely is), will our prayer, fasting, zakat and faith be to our '?detriment

.(The man did not reply (i.e. his reply was no

The Imam continued: 'But if, as we maintain, God exists, religion exists, the Resurrection and the Day of Retribution exist (and they surely do), are you destined to misfortune and win?' (It is clear that, by the dictates of reason, everyone, even on the basis of a mere possibility that beyond this world another world exists should act according to the commandments of religion so that misfortune and ruin do not (.overtake him

'?The man asked: 'The God in whom you believe, what is He like and where is He

The Imam said: “Your question is mistaken. God is not such as to be in a place; He created space. He is not such as to have quality. He created qualities. So He cannot be known in this way. God is not perceptible to any one of five senses and it is not .possible to compare Him

”.The man said: “If he is not perceptible to any one of the senses then He is nothing

The Imam replied: ‘Woe is you! (How small is your capacity for thinking). Since your senses are not able to perceive Him, you deny His Lordship. But we

for the very same reason that we cannot perceive Him are certain that only He is our ”?Lord and no one else. The man said, “Tell me when has God existed

The Imam said, ‘You tell me when God has not been so that I can tell you when He .’(.has been, (i.e. God existed before time and He created time

"?He said, "What is the evidence for the existence of God

Imam Rida replied: 'When I reflect upon my body I realize that I cannot add anything to its length or width. Nor subtract from it. Similarly I cannot choose to be happy or unhappy. For example, I may try very hard to get better from an illness, but I do not succeed). From this evidence and also from noticing the regulation of the sun and the stars the heaven and the earth and the orderliness of the whole universe, I understand that my body and this world of creatures have a Creator and a Lord who (is Knowing and able)'.(١)

:The Main points

- .There are two kinds of beings
- .There is the kind that is perceivable by the physical senses
- .There is the kind of beings that are not perceivable by the physical senses
- Allah is the Supreme Being and human physical sense does not have the ability to .perceive Him

Questions

١. ?What do we discover from the beauty of certain artifacts

٢. ?What would draw our attention to the designer and the engineer

٣. Is our understanding of these things by our external

١- (abridged version ٧٨ .Usul al-kafi part one, pag).

?senses

٤. ?Why do we believe in the existence of the engineer and the designer

?How do we come up with two categories of objects of our perception .۵

?Which objects fall under the second category .۶

?How do we learn the objects ۱-۶ exists .۷

?Where, how, and by whom was infrared radiation discovered .۸

?Where, how, and by whom was ultra violet radiation discovered .۹

?How do we learn about supersonic sounds .۱۰

?How do we learn about our intelligence .۱۱

?Can our imagination be perceived by the five senses .۱۲

?What can we build in our minds .۱۳

?Can our will and decision be perceived by the five senses .۱۴

?Can love or hate be perceived by any of the five senses .۱۵

?Can our senses perceive life? How .۱۶

?What do the above scientific examples establish .۱۷

?Why should we not reject the things the five senses do not sense .۱۸

?In what do we learn about the existence of God .۱۹

What should we say to those who do not except the existence beyond the five .۲۰ ?senses

?What is the basic idea written about the sign of God .۲۱

Can establish other evidence of the existence of God besides those mentioned in .۲۲ ?the text

Lesson ۳: Design in the Universe

point

In this universe, from the smallest atom to the largest celestial body, in everything we see, we are reminded of its perfect orderliness and exact regulation so much so that .the great scientists have been provoked to amazement

Cecil Boyce Hamann, Professor of Biology at Asbury College says that whenever he places a drop of water under a

microscope or observes the farthest star through a telescope. He is filled with great .wonder

There is so much orderliness in nature that it is possible to explain by means of .immutable laws the course any phenomenon will take before it occurs

For this reason (i.e. that the patterns and laws which govern nature are immutable and fixed), scientists endeavour to discover these laws. For if they did not hold every (kind of effort in this field would be fruitless?(١

The earth, on which we live, with respect to its size, its distance from the sun the speed of its orbital movement, etc., is so arranged that it is able to act as the support for life. Because, if in the conditions of its existence the smallest change was to take .place, losses of unacceptable dimensions would occur

The atmosphere, most of whose constituent elements are life gases, is sufficiently viscous that it can, like a shield or armour protect the earth from the deadly attack of ٢٠٠ million meteors a day which approach the earth with a speed of ٥٠ kms. Per .second

The responsibility for regulating the temperature of the earth's surface within limits which maintain life also belongs to the atmosphere, and if it did not exist, inhabited .land would, like the dry deserts, become incapable of life

?But why are we taking the long way round in explaining these things

Nearer than anything are ourselves. The mysteries of man's existence are without number so much so that the world's scientists, after years of

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The Evidence of God in an Expanding Universe Ed J.C. Monsma, New York ۱۹۵۸ -۱

.much study have not yet been able to fathom all the wonders of it

After many years of study Dr. Alexis Carel wrote a book called "L'homune, cet inconnue" (Man, the Unknown). He wrote confessing that biology and other sciences were still unable to discover the facts about the working of the human body, and that .many problems remained to be unravelled

.Now let us examine some of the marvels of our own existence

The Cells of the Body

The body of man is like a building. It is composed of small building blocks called cells, a .living entity each of which is a living entity

Each cell, therefore, is alive, and its nourishment, digestion, absorption elimination and reproduction, for example, are as in other organisms, and are perfectly carried .out

In the structure of the cells most metals, such as iron, copper, calcium, also other .elements such as oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen and sulphursare used

The number of these cells in the body of man is about ۱۰ ۱۶ which is equivalent to ten .thousand, million, million

Each one of these living cells works in perfect co-operation with the next, and all of them follow the same aim. They are very quick to suffer, having little toleration, and .nourishment must be correctly supplied for their needs

The blood, with the help of the heart, performs this duty very well. The structure of

the heart is of well-designed and perfect dimensions, so that it can supply blood to the .whole body through the agency of the blood vessels and the capillaries

The blood, after it

has delivered nourishment to the cells, absorbs poisonous substances, which have accumulated there, and returns to the heart with a dull colour. The heart delivers this to the lungs, a filtering apparatus for the blood, whereupon it is re-supplied to the .whole body with a bright colour and greater freshness

While passing through the kidneys, other parts of these poisonous matters are .removed, so that no kind of disturbance arises in the general working of the body

Do we not see in the precise combination and quantity of the metals and elements from which the cell is formed as well as in the amazing structure of the heart and its way of working which is claiming the attention of the thinkers of today, a plan of ?perfect and superior design

And if we see in the human body a mysterious whole and at the same time a design, ?are we exaggerating

.Without doubt no

And in this same way we must confess that the world of existence is firm on the foundation of perfect orderliness, and undoubtedly every orderliness and design is .the creation and accomplishment of a wise and powerful maker

.This subject will be investigated completely in further chapters

:The Main Points

- From the smallest atom to the gigantic bodies in space all work by very strict laws .and orderliness

Human body is an amazingly sophisticated creature and every part therein work in a •
.marvellous orderliness

These amazing orderliness and super structures are huge evidence of the Existence •
of a Super intelligence, the Lord and

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.the Creator of the universe

Questions

?If there were a single change in the Earth's orbit, what would happen .۱

?How strong is the "shield" or "armour" of the Earth .۲

To who does the responsibility of controlling the temperature on the surface of the .۳
?Earth belong

?What would happen if the Earth did not have an atmosphere .۴

?What is it that acts as the building blocks in human body .۵

?What is the approximate number of cells in a man's body .۶

?What does blood give to the cells .۷

?What does blood do to poisonous substances .۸

?What does the heart do to the blood .۹

?What do we are reminded of by the existence of order in nature .۱۰

?Do different parts of human body, work independently or coordinately .۱۱

?What would have happened if blood would not take poisons from the cells .۱۲

?What is the function of the kidney in human body .۱۳

How much knowledge and intelligent do you think would be needed to make a cell .۱۴ ?in human body

Do you agree with this statement: "every design is the creation and . ۱۵ "?accomplishment of a wise and powerful maker

?What other proofs can you present for the existence of God .۱۶

Lesson ۴: The Designer of the Universe

The Computer

Today, most people manage to do their most difficult work easily with the help of machines. One of the most amazing of these machines is the computer, about whose various capabilities most people have heard. For example, one variety of computers can, in a few minutes, accurately supply a doctor with medical records, which have

been stored in it, and is capable of diagnosing illnesses. It investigates details of every condition reported in the past year or even ten years ago, and makes .recommendations for the cure and therapy of disease

This computer can, when necessary, recommend a suitable medicine to the hospital pharmacy, and inform the nurse, so that she can give the medicine to the patient. Some important factories also use computers for the control and adjustment of their .machines

Is it possible that an accident or chance brought the computer into existence, or is its ?astounding design rather a proof of the intelligence and genius of its maker

Undoubtedly anyone faced with such a machine would agree that he is aware of the .greatness of the intelligence and thinking of its maker

The Automatic Kitchen

point

Orbis" is the name of an apparatus, which can prepare excellent food for more than" .one thousand people in one hour

In many present-day countries transport cafes and roadside restaurants make use of .this apparatus; it is capable of doing the work of twenty trained cooks

When you park your car in front of the restaurant, you press the button on a loudspeaker beside you, and immediately a voice asks you what you want. You give an order for various kinds of food, and exactly eight minutes later a special waiter .brings your food

?How Does the Automatic Kitchen Work

When the customer presses the button, a light switches on inside "Orbis", and as the customer gives his order for food (e.g. a sandwich), someone sitting in front of the apparatus depresses

special switches. The machine starts to work. In this way, first bread is cut by means of an automatic knife, and at the same moment a piece of meat is sent to the cooker, which grills it in exactly four minutes. Then it is transferred onto the bread and the other parts of the sandwich are also placed on the bread. At this point the warm .sandwich is put into a plastic bag and is ready

Is the automatic and well-designed "Orbis" without a maker or a designer, and did it come into existence as the result of an accident or chance? Or is it not rather the ?product of the ideas of a scientist who invented it using precise calculations

Undoubtedly, this design and order, which you notice in the above examples, is the result of the thinking of its engineer and inventor. That is to say that if there had been no inventor, and if they had not been constructed on the basis of very exact calculations and measurements, these machines would never have come into .existence

The same argument demonstrates a general proof and its undoubted truth, that design and orderliness must take their origin in a source of knowledge and power. Chance cannot be the origin of marvels having design and orderliness, because, as to everything belongs a particular effect (e.g. cold water is an unlikely cause for being scalded), it is incorrect to suppose that design and reckoning should come from .chance or mere accident

It therefore follows that

the wonderful design and orderliness which is observed in the brain, the nerves, the digestive system, the heart, the eyes, the ears and thousands of other examples constitutes complete evidence and a living proof. They prove that the world of creation has a wise and powerful designer and creator. Whatever attracts our attention among the secrets of the way creation is arranged, permits us to become more aware of the greatness of its creator. Can we say that the human brain and the ?wonders of the body are less significant than the computer

Of course, you will acknowledge that all these things are proofs of the greatness and vastness of the knowledge and power of the Creator of the world - its designer. In addition to this, the understanding and intelligence, which is seen in man is clear evidence of the manifestation of something knowledgeable and intelligent which produced him. It is not possible for someone who has no understanding and intelligence to give to his constructions and creations such understanding and .intelligence

The Holy Qur'an points to this undoubted truth and shining reality in many verses, :such as the following

God is He Who raised up the heavens without pillars you can see, He subjected the" sun and the moon each one running to a term stated; He directs the affair; He distinguishes the signs; haply you will have faith in the encounter with your Lord." ((S.۱۳; V. ۲

The existence of proper order with calculated design in creatures is evidence of the

p: ۲۷

.existence of their planers and the designers

Questions

?Are computers in an orderly manner .۱

?Will computers work properly without receiving instructions .۲

?Did computers come into existence by themselves .۳

?Are the designers of computers intelligent or insane people .۴

?Can every human being make computers or only those who know a lot about them .۵

?Is the automatic kitchen a man-made device or grows like plants .۶

?Did this device exist two hundred years ago .۷

?Why did it not exist three hundred years ago .۸

?Is making a computer easier or to make a human heart .۹

Is making an automatic computer easier or to make one of the major organs of .۱۰ ?human body

?Why are not people able to make human hearts .۱۱

?What means are needed to make a computer .۱۲

?Can the computer materials become computers without intelligent design .۱۳

?Does designing computers require greater intelligence or building a human brain .۱۴

?Whose existence do the design and order in nature prove

?Can you find an example of phenomena that would never follow designs and plans

Lesson ۵: Unveiling the Secrets of Nature

point

The amazing progress of man's knowledge is progressively uncovering the unknown .and destroying misconceptions in physiology and the experimental sciences

For example, it was once thought that some of the organs of the body were of no use. But modern science, after much analysis and research, has demonstrated specific uses for each of them, and in the future, when research tools have been further developed; more important functions will surely be discovered. We shall mention .some examples to show what we mean

The thymus .۱

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is a small gland located in the mediastinum in front of the windpipe and behind the ribs. The specific function of the thymus had been unclear, and previous scientists had thought it to be a superfluous organ. But today it is known that the thymus plays an important role in resistance and defence against foreign substances that attack the body. The thymus gland produces lymphocytes and its fundamental use is in the making of anti-bodies that defend and protect the body against viruses and foreign .protein

Some scientists believe that this gland has an important influence on sexual function and the growth of the body after puberty. Its removal results in atrophy of the sexual .organs and delayed puberty

The pineal gland, or epiphysis is more complex than the thymus and it is situated in .۲ the brain. In the past some physiologists had attributed no use to it, but nowadays it is believed that tints gland is operative in controlling sexual activity and in preventing (premature puberty. It also has other functions, which, if stopped, cause death.(۱

Previously, physicians had thought that the tonsils were without function, and in the .۳ event of swelling of the tonsils would advise their extraction, and would excise them. However, today, specialists understand their importance, and do not recommend .their removal except in exceptional circumstances

The tonsils produce white blood cells whose function is to defend the body against microbes. They perform the same function for the body as does quarantine for .diseases coming into a country

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The pineal gland acts by secreting a hormone called Glomerulotrophin that – ۱ circulates in the blood and causes another hormone called aldosterone. These are to be secreted from the surface of the adrenal gland. This latter controls the concentration of sodium and potassium in the blood. This is of importance because an imbalance in these concentrations and the stopping of the secretion of aldosterone .results in death in less than one week

They act as a strong barrier at the entrance to the respiratory passages, cleaning the inspired air against infection and destroying microbes. When the air is more polluted, or when microbes are more active, the tonsils work harder, and as a result they swell up. Removal of the tonsils is inadvisable because it results in an increased activity of microbes in the throat and lets them enter the glottis, the windpipe and the lungs, and .causes illnesses such as bronchitis

The skin lining the nose and the glottis becomes thinner than normal and causes dryness in the nose and throat (atrophy of the mucous membranes) What is more, at the time of various throat infections, the tonsils swell up and, like warning lamps, inform doctors of these illnesses. So, if they are not there the diseases will not be .diagnosed, and this may result in further complications such as angina

After much research, a group of scientists came to the conclusion that the appendix .۴ has an important role to play in the fight against cancer and its removal, when unnecessary, can be a cause of this fatal illness. It has been explained in the Journal

of the American Medical Association that removal of the appendix in those who are in .danger of getting cancer has an important effect and may itself cause cancer

The study of the examples mentioned above, together with hundreds of others, shows that when we do not find any use or advantage for something, we should not come

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to the conclusion that it really has no use or advantage. Rather, we should wait until .its secrets and functions are revealed in the light of science

For, although man has made much progress, he is still at the first stages, and has not .yet read even one line from the great Book of Nature

Einstein said in his book The Philosophy of Relativity that what we have read from the Book of Nature has taught us many things, but we know that we are far from finding .the complete solution and understanding of her secrets

Williams James also remarked that the difference between our knowledge and our .ignorance is like the difference between a drop and the ocean

Therefore, do not those materialists who, because of incomplete knowledge of the secrets and properties of a thing, think to be without use or function make a serious mistake? Whereas if they were to be more careful, they would realize that there is a world of difference between not knowing a thing and its non-existence, and that it is not correct to assume that because a man does not find a thing therefore it does not .exist

It is obvious that man's not knowing the details of one or two things from the infinity of existents should not be an obstacle to him on comprehending the, Wise Creator of .the universe through the secrets of the world of creation and its wonderful harmony

There is no doubt that the study of even one of the parts of

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creation, or even just a fragment of that part, is sufficient to lead man to the Knowing Designer and Builder of the universe. If one picks up a book, which is written in a fully rational and logical manner, but one, does not understand some things because of one's lack of knowledge, what should be one's judgement on the book? Should one ignore all the useful matters there in which are derived from the writer's creative .thinking and broad vision? Surely it is not so

(In the words of the poet:(۱

,The world is as eye, cheek, mole and brow

.for everything in its place is good

.Ignorance of something is not evidence of its absence from the realm of existence

Questions

۱. ?Which gland in human body produces antibodies

۲. ?Is it true that some parts in human body are of no use

۳. ?What are some of the functions of the pineal gland

۴. ?What kind of hormones does pineal gland produce

۵. ?What are some of the functions of the tonsils in the human body

۶. ?Is it advisable to remove the tonsils

۷. ?Do the Tonsils produce white or red blood cells

۸. ?What is the major function of appendix in human body

۹. ?Is it advisable to remove the appendix

۱۰. Did William James or Einstein say, “ We are far from knowing the secrets of ?”Nature

Did Einstein or William James say, “our ignorance of the world is an ocean and our .۱۱
?knowledge of the world is like one drop

What has the Journal of American .۱۲

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Gulshan-i Raz, Shabistari -۱

?medical Association has said about removing the Appendix

?How much of nature one would need to study to learn about its designer .۱۳

?Does not knowing means that the unknown does not exist .۱۴

?What has destroyed some of the misconceptions about the secrets of the world .۱۵

?Can you point out the weakness of the argument in the text .۱۶

?If you did find out any weakness can you compensate .۱۷

Lesson ۶: Lavoisier's Law and Creation

point

We have all seen names of fire, and we recognise what they are, but when we see these flames soaring up do we ever stop to ask what in fact they are. Today we know that flames are composed of gases combined with oxygen from the air. But, previously some chemists had thought that there was some invisible substance in charcoal and oil which, when there is ignition, is released in the form of flames. To this substance they gave such names as “sulphur” This idea gathered many supporters, .”and many scientists subscribed to it, calling this invisible substance “phlogiston

George Ernst Stahl; German scientist, chemist and biologist, who, in ۱۶۹۴, became professor at Hall University. (b. ۱۶۶۰, d. ۱۷۳۴) said that phlogiston was a substance, which escaped and which was the basis and essence of fire; that it was hidden inside inflammable materials; and that at the time of burning it was released in the form of

.flames

He said that the reason that wood, charcoal and oil burn readily is that there is more phlogiston in them, but that in metal there

is less of it. He and other followers of this idea believed that in the combustion of iron, phlogiston was released and what remained took the form of rust. They also said that when sulphur was burnt, phlogiston was released, and a colourless gas remained .which was sulphur without phlogiston

Rouelle [French scientist (b. ۱۷۰۳. d. ۱۷۷۰) a great chemist and the tutor of Lavoisier, also accepted this theory, and tried very hard to prove it. Lavoisier, the French scientist, one of the founders of modern chemistry, researched into what his teacher, Rouelle, and other scientists had said, spending much time thinking about their .theory, until he realised that the belief in phlogiston was groundless

In ۱۷۷۲, he effected the combustion of a piece of lead by focusing the rays of the sun on to it by means of magnifying lenses. He observed that its weight increased. He deduced that some part of the air had become combined with the metal and had added to its weight: if phlogiston had been there, the weight of the lead would have .decreased. Thus, he claimed, the phlogiston theory should be abandoned

In support of his view he asserted that if the 'burns' lead were heated it would return .that part of the air which it had taken, and would again become lead

In ۱۷۷۶ he performed another experiment in which he put a crucible of mercury over a heater and left it for ۱۲ days. It was not long before a light red film was observed

on the surface of the mercury. He found that the air in contact with the mercury could not support life. He deduced that a part of the air inside the crucible had reacted with the mercury, forming a light red film. In order to confirm this, he separated the light

red film and heated it. He observed that a gas was released from it. This gas supported life. He came to the conclusion that there is nothing, which is given off from mercury when it is heated. But rather that there is a gas in the air which combines .(with the mercury to form mercurous oxide (HgO

Lavoisier then asserted that there was no evidence for the existence of phlogiston. In chemical reactions the total weight of all substances entering into the reaction equals the total weight of all the substances resulting from that reaction. In other words, .('Rien ne se pera, et rien ne se crea.' (Nothing perishes, and nothing is created

In this way the theory of phlogiston lost its supporters. We know today that when something catches fire it is because it enters into combination with oxygen, and not because an invisible substance comes out of the combustion in the form of flames. The history of phlogiston and the theory of Lavoisier show us clearly that when Lavoisier said 'Nothing perishes and nothing is created.' By this he meant that in a chemical reaction nothing disappears and nothing is added, and he was not referring to the origin of

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.the creation of the world, which is a philosophical issue

Unfortunately, some people, imagining that Lavoisier had wanted to answer a philosophical question, asserted that the event of creation was not compatible with Lavoisier's theory, because he has said that nothing is created and nothing is lost. How, they asked, could something be created from nothing? However, by referring to the history of the two theories, it becomes clear that Lavoisier was referring only to chemical reactions, which take place in the present world, and he meant that this world is such that within its bounds nothing extra can be added and nothing can disappear. And the problem of whether the world was created or whether it is eternal .is a philosophical matter about which Lavoisier's theory remains totally silent

The point is that when we learn about scientific theories and ideas, we must look deeply into what has been said, and be careful to examine them with specialists in

each matter so that the truth may become clear. Because it is possible that .inattention to these matters may result in a weakening of our beliefs

Moreover, we must not submit to a theory without carefully examining it, so that we imagine it to be an indubitably ascertained fact. There have been many theories, which have been supported through the ages by various scholars, but which were refuted later and all traces effaced. An example of this is the theory of phlogiston whose history we have just related. Even the theory of Lavoisier

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has lost its original form (the principle of the conservation of matter), and has become the principle of the conservation of matter and energy. For example, if ۸ grams of oxygen were made to react with I gram of hydrogen, Lavoisier's theory would predict that ۹ grams of water would be formed. But we now understand, through more exact calculations that a small part of the substance is converted into energy and that the .amount of water formed is a little less than ۹ grams

Questions

۱. What substance forms the flame in a burning fire?

۲. What was people's opinion about this phenomenon before the opinion of Lavoisier?

۳. Whose theory says, "Nothing perishes and nothing is created?"

۴. What should be our attitude to the changing theories?

۵. Should we accept some opinion without ascertaining its truth?

۶. Is it true that flame is a certain form of substance that comes out of the burning materials?

۷. Does Lavoisier's theory deal with whether the world is created or not?

۸. What happens to the gases coming out of the burning materials and the oxygen present around?

?Is there a difference between a philosophical and a chemical issue .۹

?Is Lavoisiers's theory a chemical or a philosophical issue .۱۰

?Does the principle of the conservation of matter prove that it is not created .۱۱

?What change has taken place in the theory of conservation of matter .۱۲

Lesson ۷: The Creatures Eternal need for Allah

point

Examine the following examples, and then you will realize the extent to which the .creatures of this world show the presence of a Creator

.۱

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How do those who construct airplanes act together to produce a plane? These specialized engineers assemble the metal sections in a specific manner according to exact equations so that the plane may fly, carrying passengers and cargo. Of course, the work of the construction engineers is the assembly with their own hands of the basic materials according to their plans, in such a way that when their work is finished their activity ends. As for the metal sections, the engines, the lights, the seats, etc., which are made by the engineers, these do not depend upon them once their work is .finished

If we want to build a house and we are in possession of all the raw materials, is that .۲ sufficient? Surely, we need a builder and his workmen not in order to produce the raw materials but so as to put them together according to their craft. It is clear that we do not need the workmen for producing the materials used in the building, but that we need them only in so far as the use of these materials is concerned in this way a .house can be built from these materials

A person who has never seen the Eiffel Tower can nevertheless construct it in his .۳

imagination in no time at all, merely from having heard about it. He can even construct .it higher than it is, and imagine people climbing it

The existence of the Tower in the imagination is, as suggested in the previous two

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examples, the work of the one who has imagined it. The basic materials of the plan and the house were not produced by their constructors, but all the materials for the imagined Tower were made by the one who imagined it, not obtained from some place or another. That is why their size is not dependent on the quantity of raw material available, and it can be made larger according to the wish of the one who imagines it. We can see that imaginary forms derive their existence from ourselves. They remain in our minds as long as we want them to, and when we forget about .them they become nothing again, and have no further existence in our imagination

From this last example we can conclude that anything whose existence depends on the existence of something else cannot be independent, and at every moment has .need of the other

Now we can understand the condition of the created things of this world, which have come into existence from nothing and are the creation of God. Are these, at every moment, in need of their creator? Some people may think that the created things of this world, after their creation, do not stand in need of their creator for their continued existence. However this is a completely erroneous concept. Because the things in the world are the effects and creations of God and are identical with the imagined forms, which we ourselves can construct in imaginations, in that at every moment they

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.need the One who created them in order to continue existing

The better to understand this, imagine in your mind a human figure, speaking, walking and working according to his will. Does this figure have any independence? Clearly his existence is due to you, for if you cease to want him to exist, he will be annihilated and

.returned to nothingness

This is the condition of the entire universe of creation, which is completely from God, created by Him, and in no way independent. It is always in need of God. Also, if God .ceased to will its existence, it would return to nothingness

:Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an

O men, you are the ones that have need of Allah, He is the All sufficient. The All" (laudable. If He will, He can put you away and bring a new creation." (S. ۳۵: V.۱۵-۱۶

This is a subject to which Islam directs the attention of its followers. For example, it is instructed that in prayer (salat) when one rises one should say bi hawli'l-lahi wa '.quwwatihi aqumu wa aq'ud - "With the power of Allah I do stand up and sit down

In truth, if we realize that we have no independence from God, and that it is only He Who has created us thinking and willing creatures to strive in the way of happiness, and that it is only He Whose all-embracing Love encompasses us. Therefore we prostrate before Him and say subhana rabbi al-a'la wa bi hamdah – Glory be to my

p: ۴۰

".Supreme Lord and Praise be to Him

Questions

?Is an airplane independent of its manufacturer .۱

?What will happen if the manufacturer abandons the airplane .۲

?Will it cease to exist due to abandonment .۳

?How would one make such a finely built device to cease existing .۴

?What is the difference between a real and a make belief object .۵

?When a make belief object cease to exist .۶

What is the similarity between a make belief object and things that the Creator has .۷
?made

?Why do the creatures need the creator all the time .۸

?What is the proof to show that creatures do not need the creator .۹

?What is the proof to show that creatures do need the creator all the time .۱۰

?According to the verse of the holy Qur'an who is self-sufficient and who is not so .۱۱

?According the above verse whom has the power to replace one nation by another .۱۲

Lesson ۸: Allah the Self-sufficient

A Testable and Irrefutable Law

The world we see with our eyes is a material world composed of atoms. Every object has a special place and special properties, which vary from situation to situation and according to their orientation. Distance plays a role in the actions of these properties and the nearer the cause is to the effect the stronger the effect is; the further away it is, the weaker the effect, until a distance is reached where the cause has no action at .all. To elucidate this point consider the following

The power of a magnet is not the same at all distances: the nearer the .۱

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metal is to the magnet, the stronger the power of attraction. If a nail is placed at a distance of two centimeters from a magnet, the attraction will be stronger than if it is .placed at a distance of ten centimetres

The heat of the sun on the surface of the planet Venus is not the same as it is on the .۲ surface of the Earth. Since Venus is nearer the sun it receives more heat and is .therefore hotter than the Earth

The light of a lamp may reach a hundred meters but within this distance the .۳

intensity is not uniform. The nearer to the lamp we are the greater the intensity of its .light

The voice of a public speaker may reach fifty meters but like the light it is not .۴ uniform within this distance. The nearer to him we are the louder his voice, the further .away we are, the more difficult it is to hear

If a leader wishes to exert his influence without using agents or modern methods of .۵ communication, he cannot succeed, because his own efforts have an effect in a certain place and cannot influence those who are far from him. On the other hand, by using modern methods he can exert his influence on all people. Of course, this depends not only on his own activity, but also on the power of his supporters and, in .the same way, his power varies in relation to the distance he is from his supporters

These

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examples show that all things, which are situated in a certain place, do not have an equal effect at all distances, the nearer we are to the centre of something, the .greater its effect will be and vice versa

?Does God Have a Centre

Some people may possibly think that like the sun and other material things God has a place, and that He has a seat from which He exerts His influence over His Creation. However, this is not the case, because His influence on creation, which is His work, is the same in every place, from the depths of the oceans to the furthest parts of the .universe. There is no place to which His influence does not reach in sufficiency

This influence is not such as has a centre, such that the further we go from it the weaker it becomes, until we reach a point where there is no trace of His influence and chaos reigns. For if God had a place like other material things, His influence would vary throughout the universe. Therefore we can deduce from this that the creator of this world has no location and no centre. Indeed, God is the creator of "place" and it is

.impossible that the creator should be dependent on what He has created

God cannot be compared with an inventor, because, as we explained previously, an inventor is not a creator. His only genius is that he understands the properties of ,things and is successful in bringing together certain elements to make something

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which, in some cases, he is himself in need of. But God, Who is the creator of all .creation, is not in need of what He has created

?Is God visible

Now, since we have seen that God has no place, it is clear that he has no body either. Because a body needs a place, and there can be no body which has no place. Since .God has no body, He cannot be seen, because our eyes can see only bodies

God does not need the creatures

Since God is the creator of nourishment and other necessities of life of all existents, .we must agree that He needs none of these things

God therefore, is the entire Truth Who does not need the creatures. Unlike human beings, He does not need shelter nourishment, and the other necessities of life. Rather all people and things are in need of Him. You may ask: "If God has no body, occupies no space and cannot be seen then what is He and how can we say that He "?exists

To understand this, take the following example. Electricity is neither solid, nor liquid, nor gas. These negations do not deny the existence of electricity. And it could never be true to say that because electricity is none of these things, therefore it does not exist. We have to admit that electricity is a fact, which cannot be describable by any of .the afore-mentioned conditions

God who is Self-sufficient and has neither body, nor place, nor can He be seen, nor He needs any of the creatures is

perfect and free of these imperfections. The unlimited Being, God is the source of all .existence, Perfect and Self-sufficient

These properties distinguish His Being from other beings, and in God we must believe. Intelligence and human nature acknowledge the existence of God. Wise and honest person does not deny His Existence. Comparing this with the belief that God is on a level with man, having a body, children and other such attributes and appendages, .shows the supremacy of Islamic thinking

In fact, many materialists reject God because the true God (i.e. Allah as He is understood through Islam) has not been made known to them, and what they have .considered is not the real God

The greatness of the universe is a clear evidence of the existence of the Self-sufficient creator.

One who would need something, anything could never guard and control this huge .creature, the whole universe

.Allah, God is Self-sufficient and Almighty." Ch. ۱۱۲:۲"

Questions

۱. Can the force of a piece of magnate be the same on a piece of iron from one and ?four inches apart

۲. ?Can the intensity of heat remain the same passing through space and objects

۳. ?Can the intensity of light passing through space and objects remain the same

۴. ?Can the intensity of sound passing through space and objects remain the same

۵. Does a ruler close to his subjects and centre have greater control or one far away ?from them

?Does God have a centre to control His creatures .۶

?Can space stop the power of its creator .۷

Can any obstacle .۸

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?like that in Question one through seven become a problem for the Creator

?Can the eyes see the creator .۹

?Does the creator need any body or anything .۱۰

?What the phenomenon that is neither solid, nor liquid and nor gas is called .۱۱

?In what way the Islamic guidance leads to the real creator .۱۲

?Lesson ۹: Allah's Omniscience More knowledge – more benefit

point

Mighty and powerful bulldozers which are used in building, and which have various important uses, testify to the knowledge of their designer and manufacturers. We must agree that the inventor was very well acquainted with the laws of mechanics the various alloys of metals and the formula of physics. All that is made by man reflects the intelligence and knowledge of its maker. The better and more efficient the .product the wider and more complete the knowledge of its maker

Something beyond compare

The grandeur and mystery of creation cannot be compared to a bulldozer or other man-made artifacts. The infinite details seen in the beings and objects of the universe :indicate the unlimited knowledge of God. Let us examine the following

Newton said that a study of the components of the ear and the eye would lead us to .۱ understand that the maker of the ear was thoroughly acquainted with the laws of acoustics, and that the maker of the eye was thoroughly acquainted with the laws of

light and vision. A study of the heavenly bodies, he said, would lead us to understand .the Truth, which governs the universe

.The physiology of the bat is full of amazing things .۲

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In order to be able to find its way in the dark without running into obstacles, the animal sends out ultrasonic waves in front of itself rather like radar. If there is an obstacle in the way the sound waves reach it and are reflected back, and thus the bat .can steer clear of the obstacle

Although insects are very small, they are very delicate and wonderful in their . ۳ structure. For example, some of them, instead of eyes with one lens, have compound eyes made up of individual visual units called ommatids every one of which has three .parts: a cornea, a lens and a retina

The number of ommatids varies between trisects. Glow-worms have about ۲,۵۰۰, but in others there can be between ۱۰,۰۰۰ and ۲۸,۰۰۰. Because insects cannot rotate their heads, they can be permitted, by these compound eyes, to see things, which happen, .beside them or behind them

The above examples show that the creator of the world undertook His creation in His .perfect wisdom and infinite knowledge

Does God know all the things after He has created them? And the answer is, yes, of course He does. God knows about things, whatever their place and whenever they .happen. He is aware of the shining of the furthest star in the highest heaven

The tempestuousness of the foaming blue waves breaking on the furthest shores of the ocean, of the most mysterious hollows of the most remote valleys in the folds of the mountains of the rustling of even one

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leaf in the gentle breeze. He is aware of the doleful coo of the owl in the deepest

silence of tile forest. He is also aware of the flicker of the glow-worm among the leaves, of the innumerable fish with their infinite colors and variety in all the waters of the world. He is aware, of the birth of the fawn of the honey-colored gazelle, in the depths of the forest. He is aware, of the falling of the clear, pearly dewdrop from the petal of the half-opened rosebud, in the recess of the rocks. He knows the height of the mountains, the covering of the sky, the expanse of the lands and the seas and the treasures of the mines, the hidden depths of the caves and of all and everything.

How beautiful is the word of God!

He knows what is in the land and sea; not a leaf falls, but He knows it. Not a grain in the earths shadows, Not a thing, fresh or withered, but it is in a Book Manifest. (ch. ۶. V. ۵۹)

The evidence of God's knowledge

He who creates and gives existence is aware of His creation and always attends to it, in the same way, as we are not unaware of the forms we create in our own imaginations. As long as we wish them to exist, they remain in our minds, but when we turn our attention away from them, they cease to exist. If you imagine a person, you are necessarily aware of all his movements

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and his resting. His actions are never hidden from your mind, because this imaginary person is your creation, that is, he was not in your mind before you thought of him, and you brought him into you mind by your imagination.

God, who created the world and all of creation, whose existence comes from Him, oversees it all and is never unaware of it. There is a great difference between us who imagine various forms in our minds and God, who created the universe. We ourselves depend on God for our existence, and our existence comes from Him. However, God is independent of all things and has given existence to all things. It is for this reason that He is called the real creator.

The difference between Creator and Maker

The maker of the computer is not the creator and did not give it its existence; his only skill was that he gave a new form to what was already in existence. He was not aware .of the computations and the information that will be stored in it in the future

Similarly, other inventors, discoverers and artisans are not informed of all the minutiae of the movements and resting of what they have made, because they have not given existence to them, they have not brought them from non-existence into .existence

The raw materials were already in existence in the world. Only, by analyzing and constructing, they have changed their form. Take the case of the airplane, which is ,made from raw materials in mines, which were extracted

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.smelted and forged and made into the finished product

Clearly, then, the makers did not create what they made; they only changed the form of the materials. For this reason they are not permanently aware of their artifacts, and one cannot, therefore, properly call them creators. If, in some cases they have to .be called creators, they have only been called so figuratively, not literally

But God, Who has given existence to all things, is always aware and knowledgeable of :their, actions, because He is the real and true creator. The Holy Qur'an says

(Shall He not know who created?" (۶۷:۱۴"

Now we have understood that we, ourselves and all the creatures of this world are not separated from the glorious presence of God. Wherever we are, and to whatever land we travel, in the depths of the oceans, in the outer reaches of space, in the narrow places of the valleys, we are not hidden from Him. He sees the smallest of our .good or bad deeds, and rewards and punishes accordingly

?Can someone who knows God and believes in Him fall prey to sin

Questions

?What type of things indicates the ultimate knowledge of God .۱

?The maker of the car was familiar with the laws of acoustics .۲

?What was the maker of the eye familiar with .۳

?How does the bat steer clear of the obstacles even though it cannot see .۴

?What are ommatids .۵

?How can insects see behind themselves without rotating their heads .۶

?Does God know all things after creating those things .۷

Can you .۸

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?give a few examples of some of the things that God knows of

?Who gave existence to all things .۹

?What does The Holy Qur'an say about God .۱۰

?Are we separated from the Holy Presence of God .۱۱

?Can we ever be hidden from God anywhere .۱۲

?How does God reward and punish people .۱۳

Lesson ۱۰: The Unique in Power and Strength

The Wide and Mysterious Universe

A little reflection on the creation of each of the objects of existence will reveal to our :minds the unique power of the Creator. As examples, consider the following

The defence system of the body has for a long time attracted the attention of .۱

physiologists. The body's defense system is a complicated one consisting of the lymph glands, the thymus the spleen, the liver and the bone marrow. The cells of these parts of the body, despite the difference in their structure, follow a common aim, viz. defending the body against foreign elements such as microbes and poisons. In this task, the white blood cells, found in their greatest concentration in the lymph glands, play a vital role. When a foreign body enters the organism the white blood cells, which are about ٧ to ٣٠ microns in diameter rush immediately to the site of the invasion, and, .in various ways, prevent an increase in the danger

To help these cells the body follows different ways in the fight against foreign elements, and to combat each foreign substance it manufactures antibodies. The antibodies made in the body are of different sorts. Some of them are for the destroying of microbes

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and their elimination; some of them neutralize animal, insect and chemical poisons. Some stop the activity of microbes, and others separate out the poisonous substances in microbes and other noxious bodies. Yet another kind comes into action .when blood from an incompatible blood group enters the body

The point is that the body can manufacture suitable antibodies against all kinds of .foreign substances, even those which are as yet unknown to modern science

:The Director of the Leon Observatory on Mount Palomar in Arizona has said .٢

As long as the telescope of this observatory had not been invented, the range of the" visible universe was not more than five hundred light years, but this telescope has extended this range to one thousand million light years. As a result, millions of new galaxies have been found, and some of these are a thousand million light years from us. But beyond this distance there is a great, dark, fearful expanse in which nothing can be seen. That is to say that no light comes from it, which leaves its traces on the photographic plates of the telescope. But, without doubt, there are hundreds of .millions of galaxies, by the force of whose gravity the universe is held together

The whole of this immense visible universe which contains a hundred thousand" million galaxies is nothing but a small and insignificant speck in a still more immense universe, and I am not sure that we shall not find beyond that yet another universe."

Ali ibn Abu Talib the

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first Imam, said: "We are not able to fathom the depths of Your Greatness. Only we know that You are Living and Everlasting that neither slumber nor sleep takes hold of You.

No sight can reach You, and no eye can see You, but You see the eyes, and reckon ' the time-span of everything. The heads and feet of man are in Your hold.

What is it that we see of Your Creation? What is the Power that causes us to wonder? What can we describe of Your Ruling? Those parts which are hidden from us, which our eyes cannot reach, which our minds cannot comprehend, which are covered by curtains of concealment, are more magnificent."

Indeed. The unique Power of Allah has brought everything into existence. And nothing falls outside the area of His command. The world exists by the Will of Allah, and it will continue to exist as long as He desires. The stars, the moon, the sun and the other heavenly bodies move round by His Power, and the amazing order of the universe is entirely in His hands. He is able to change it to a new order whenever He wishes. It is not the case that He created the world and then abandoned it. The rotation, growth, pulsation, existence and sustenance of everything are from His Will. Nothing can happen without His willing nor can anything remain in existence. The One who brings things into existence, Who sustains them and governs them is Allah.

An Order Superior to the Natural One

It is true that

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Allah has laid down a natural order for this universe, according to which it is possible to anticipate the future but in certain circumstances, Allah manifests His wide-ranging Power, and by His Will creates a superior order which can dominate the existing order. :Instances of this superior order can be seen from history and in everyday life

In these cases, in fact, the hand of Allah is at work in the universe; at times He raises those who have fallen, and at other times He causes those who are elevated to be cast down. It is for this reason that those who have a strong faith in the powerful God do not become disappointed in life. In whatever situation they find themselves, in the darkness of despair, the flame of hope is alight, and they are confident that they will .find deliverance through the help of God

We have all read or heard the story of Moses and Pharaoh. Pharaoh was unequalled in cruelty. He killed the sons of the Israelites so that the promised one of the children of Israel, who, he had heard, would come to destroy his throne and crown would not come into the worldly life. He thought that by these contrivances, by persistence and through the natural order he could counteract the Power of God. But his efforts were .in vain. At last the promised one was born

The mother of the child was inspired to place him in a box and to cast him onto the waters

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of the Nile. The river carried him down to the palace of Pharaoh and the eyes of Pharaoh's wife caught sight of the box. She took it out of the water. When she saw the infant in it, she asked Pharaoh to take the child as their own son, and Pharaoh agreed. The powerful hand of God kept the child of whom Pharaoh was so afraid in his very .lap, till he grew up, became strong and brought down the crown of the Pharaoh

Similarly, the Power of God caused the vain efforts and devices of the brothers of Yusuf to come to nothing. Yusuf fell down into the well, but he was raised to a high .position in the land of Egypt

The unbelievers of Mecca joined hands to do away with the Prophet of Islam. They began to make trouble for the Muslims, and even applied economic sanctions against the Prophet and his followers for several years in the valley of the mountains of Abu Talib. Eventually they decided to murder the Prophet, thinking that by such subterfuges they could achieve something. But the Will and Power of God preserved the Prophet, and He caused Islam to prosper day by day, and brought down the .Quraysh and the disbelievers

These and other examples lead to the truth that the order of this world is in the hands of God, and that when it is according to His wish, He can cause a new order to rule .over the normally existing order

,Therefore

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our minds and our consciences demand that we humble ourselves before this Great and Beneficent Power, act in all obedience and avoid opposing our Creator. The powerful hand of God has moved us through various stages and has brought us to our ?present stage of intelligence and ability. Is it right that we should forget Him

One who knows God, acknowledging that he has such a Wise and Powerful helper, will not fear any difficulty The most complex and difficult problems can be solved by him, and consequently he will try to reach his aim with unflinching determination arising from his faith in God. He will not be afraid of any obstacles, for he sees himself in the .shade of a great Power, which will enable him to overcome all difficulties

Belief in God and His unique power enabled the Prophet to fight large groups single-handed, to stand firm against difficult circumstances, so that he could build the structure of tawhid and a program for life. In this way he was able to establish .humanity and virtue

A man whose heart is overflowing with faith in the Creator of the world, and is filled with love for the Truth will never feel alone, disappointed or without hope, and the

light of God will always illuminate the corners of his heart. Obviously, such a man will .make himself ready for a better and more virtuous life with unbounded enthusiasm

Those who have said, "Our Lord is God," and are steadfast in their belief need have

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.(no fear or be grieved (۴۶:۱۳

They will be the dwellers of Paradise wherein they will live forever as a reward for .(what they have done (۴۶:۱۴

To those who have said, "God is our Lord, " and who have remained steadfast to their belief, the angels will descend saying, "Do not be afraid or grieved. Receive the glad .(news of the Paradise, which was promised to you (۴۱:۳۰

We are your guardians in this world and in the life to come, where you will have (whatever you call for, (۴۱:۳۱

.(a hospitable welcome from the All-forgiving and All-merciful God" (۴۱:۳۲

Questions

?What does the defence system of the body do .۱

?Which parts of the body work for the defence of the body .۲

?What is the size of the white blood cells .۳

?In how many ways do the defenders of the body defend .۴

?What do the white blood cells do when a foreign body enters the organism .۵

?Which organs of the body manufacture antibodies .۶

?Do the defenders of the body just destroy the enemy or use other methods also .۷

?How much was the range of the universe before modern telescopes .۸

According to the director of Leon observatories how large is the size of the visible .٩
?universe

?How many galaxies does the visible universe have .١٠

?According to Imam Ali can anyone comprehend the greatness of Allah .١١

?Does Allah according to Imam Ali slumber or sleep .١٢

?Why can no one comprehend the great power of Allah .١٣

Is it possible to predict the future of .١۴

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?a creature by the help of natural laws

?Does Allah's superior order dominate the existing order .١۵

?Why could pharaoh not destroy Moses .١۶

?Who frustrated the bad intentions of the brothers of Yusuf .١٧

?Why could the unbelievers of Mecca not defeat the Prophet of Islam .١٨

?Which power gives genuine comfort to the hearts of faithful people .١٩

?Who will never feel alone .٢٠

Lesson ١١: Allah the Unique

point

From the first day that man set foot on this earth, he has always wanted to know the cause and the source of creation, and this springs from his pure nature which seeks .the original cause and source so as to worship it

When someone who lives far from the rush of society and the habits of his cultural environment looks about himself for the first time, he notices the earth and the sky,

day and night, the sun and the moon, their rising and setting, the wind and the rain, the succession of the seasons, the bearing forth of fruit from plants and trees, the various species of animals, their movement, growth, feeding reproduction, and their .being equipped for what they require in life

He turns to himself, and sees his hands, feet, eyes, ears, nose, mouth, teeth and the other parts of his body, each of which has its own task. All of them pursue the one aim, .namely to live

He then goes on to think about the relationship between each of these things, and he realises that there is a kind of connection and harmony between all of

them, in such a way that all of them make one harmonious unit over which one order rules. In this unique harmonious order, the following particularities are to be :remarked

It must have a founder and a creator, because this marvellous order and harmony .۱ .cannot be the result of an aimless accident

There is a purpose in the whole of creation and every part of it and in the midst of it .۲ .in man, and it is not created for amusement

The Creator of this universe is powerful and great, worthy of adoration, and so He .۳ .must be given complete respect and be worshiped

This Great Creator is aware and comprehends the whole of the universe and what .۴ .happens in it and within it the actions of man

Thus man is not in need of an intermediary to worship Him, it must be a direct activity between man and God; and to worship such things as angels, stars, idols, saints and .holy men as intermediaries is not good or lawful

Why man leaves the worship of One God

What was mentioned above concerned the propensity of the nature of a right-minded person whose thinking is not tainted with the false habits of his environment and from copying bad family influences; is what man's propensity towards the worship of one God would mean. There are different causes for an unaware person to leave his own nature and to wander in the way of unbelief, some of which shall be .mentioned here

Some idol worshipers have said that because God is .۱

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beyond our understanding and comprehension and does not exist in any particular place that we can turn to and worship. We worship persons who have been respected and honoured by Him, so that they may be pleased with us become intermediaries .between us and Him and bring us nearer to Him

They have ignored the fact that although God is not in any direction, He encompasses everything and is Omnipresent. Therefore, wherever we turn, there is God, and we .can speak with Him without the need for any intermediary

"Wherever you turn, there is Allah, God present." (۲:۱۵)

Again, Sometimes after the death of one of the elders of a tribe who had been .۲ respected and honoured by the members of that tribe, they made him into a statue as a memorial, and honoured this, turning towards it at the time of worshipping God. However, soon they stopped remembering God and their honouring of the statue turned into worship of it, and then the making and worshipping of statues became widespread. Thus we read in history that the descendants of Cain made a statue in memory of their great father a figure called Wadd, but gradually, in paying respect to .the statue, they prostrated themselves in front of it and worshiped it

Man sometimes respected other beings for the benefit they had for him, and he .۳ counted them among the manifestations of God. This respect gradually turned into worship. Worship of fire among the ancient Persians and of the Sun among the

Aryans of ancient India was in this category. This was the origin of the appearance of the belief in many gods and of idol worshipping and because the generations who came afterwards did not think carefully about the ideas and beliefs of their ancestors, .they fell into polytheism and were lost

The Confrontation between True Religion and Polytheism

True religion has always strove to turn people away from the misleading ways of polytheism towards the path of tawhid the belief in One God. The Qur’an mentions and praises the endless fight of the great messengers to eradicate polytheism and to .guide people to One God

:For example, about Ibrahim it says that he said to the people of his land

”?What are these statues that you worship“

.We follow the same way as our forefathers did.” They replied“

You and your forefathers,” he said, “have clearly gone wrong.” And Ibrahim decided“ .to make these ignorant people aware through word and example

One day he entered the house of the idols and struck them down with an axe. When :people understood that he had done this, they became very angry, and demanded

”?Was it you who did this to our gods“

Ibrahim gave them an answer through which they might understand the vanity of .their beliefs and thinking, and told them to ask their idols themselves

The people thought much about this, and after considering his answer they answered :shamefully

”.You know idols do not speak“

Why then,” said Ibrahim; “do you worship these weak beings who have not the“

strength to defend themselves. Why is your thinking so

(distorted?"(۱

To Abraham We gave the right guidance and We knew him very well (۲۱:۵۱). Abraham asked his father and his people, "What are these statues which you worship?" (۲۱:۵۲). .(They replied, "We found our fathers worshipping them." (۲۱:۵۳

He said, "Both you and your fathers have certainly been in error." (۲۱:۵۴) They exclaimed, "Have you brought the Truth or are you joking?" (۲۱:۵۵). He said, "Your Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. It was He who created them and I testify to .(this fact" (۲۱:۵۶

Abraham said to himself, "By God! I will devise a plan against their idols when they are away." (۲۱:۵۷) He broke all the idols into pieces, except the biggest among them so that perhaps people would refer to it (۲۱:۵۸). (When the people came to the temple and saw the broken idols) they asked each other, "Who has done this to our gods? He certainly .(is an unjust person" (۲۱:۵۹

Some of them said, "We heard a youth called Abraham speaking against the idols" (۲۱:۶۰). Their chiefs said, "Bring him before the eyes of the people and let them testify that he has spoken against the idols." (۲۱:۶۱) They asked, "Abraham, did you do this to .(our idols?" (۲۱:۶۲

He replied, "I think the biggest among them has broken the smaller ones. Ask them if they are able to speak" (۲۱:۶۳). Thereupon they realised their own foolishness and said, "We ourselves are wrong-doers" (۲۱:۶۴). With their heads cast

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See Ch. ۲۱:۵۱-۷۰ -۱

down they said, "Abraham, you know that idols do not speak. How then can you ask

(such a question?" (۲۱:۶۵

He said, "Do you, instead of God, worship things that can neither harm nor benefit you?" (۲۱:۶۶). Woe to you for what you worship instead of God. Have you no understanding?" (۲۱:۶۷). They said, "Burn him to ashes if you want to help your gods" (۲۱:۶۸). We said to the fire, "Be cool and peaceful (with Abraham)" (۲۱:۶۹). They had .(devised an evil plan (against Abraham), but We turned it into failure." (۲۱:۷۰

These great guides, the Messengers, always reminded men that they could establish a relationship between themselves and God at any time and in any place without the need of an intermediary, and they reminded men that in worshipping God they must not look towards anything or anybody, for any reason, and that their worship must be only for God. If in their worship there is the least attention to anything other than God, then that worship would be for the two - God and the other - and this is unacceptable .to God

The consequence of tawhid

One who knows that God is One and believes that He is Aware of everything and has Power to do everything, and believes that all creatures are formed and made by Him, will, because of this, never give allegiance to other things. The greatest power the most abundant wealth, will never enslave him and make him bow down for anything. Such a person will

.submit only to God and will prostrate only in front of His Glory

The ancient Iranians believed that their autocratic and arrogant kings were manifestations of God, and they submitted to their monarchs without asking for any reason. They had no social or individual freedom. When the emissary of the Arabs met the Iranian general at the time of the war between the Muslim Arabs and the Iranians (۱۶ AH.), he sat on the ground without ceremony and ignored the luxurious surroundings of Iranian life. When the general inquired of the intentions of the

:Muslims, the emissary replied

Allah has raised us up to lead people away from the worship of the servants of Allah" towards the worship of Allah Himself, and to invite them from the narrow confines of the world towards the expanses of freedom, from the tyranny of other religions to the .justice of Islam." Tabari in his Tarikh vol. ۵, p. ۲۲۶۹-۷۱

In the light of tawhid there is no alternative for the servants of God but to follow the Divine Law who is founded on wisdom and justice. It is clear that following the Divine Law will cause real justice to increase, and any kind of tyranny and aggression to come to nothing. On the other hand, idolaters, and those who do not believe in One God can never create real justice among themselves, because every tribe or group has its own god, which is different from the others, and reliance on this god encourages to be aggressive

towards other groups or tribes. In this way real justice is of no avail, and ignorance, .disunity and tyranny in word and in deed take its place

In conclusion, belief in One God – in the true meaning of the phrase – makes man free, pure and unified and gives him peace of mind. He will not be subjected to oppression, .tyranny and discord

Thus we can understand the real sense of the phrase "Say, there is no god but Allah, ".and you will prosper

Questions

?Why does man want to know the creator .۱

?What goals do the parts of the human body pursue .۲

?What do human beings look at around them in the world .۳

?What conclusion do human beings reach upon reflecting one different creature .۴

?Can you mention in some brief remarks and conclusion ۱-۴ .۵

?Why do some people worship other things besides one God .۶

?What reasons do the idol worshippers give for worshipping their idols .۷

?What fact is it that idol worshippers have ignored .۸

?What does v ۱۱۵ of ch. ۲ say .۹

?What reason for idols worshipping are mentioned in the text ۲ .۱۰

?What reason for idols worshipping are mentioned in the text ۳ .۱۱

What kind of relations had polytheism and monotheism been having throughout .۱۲
?history

?Can you answer the questions by Ibrahim and the adversaries ۱-۳ .۱۳

?What does Verse ۵۱ chapter ۷۰ say .۱۴

?What kind of worship is the worship with divided intentions .۱۵

?What was the attitude of the Muslim emissary .۱۶

What kind of tradition did the Islamic Iranians have .۱۷

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?with their monarchy

?What was the answer to the Islamic emissary to the Iranian General .۱۸

?What result would worship only one God produce in the society .۱۹

?What fact is it that gives purity, unity and peace of mind to man .۲۰

Lesson ۱۲: Dualism and Monotheism

Good and Evil

Dualists were those who believed that creation are divided into two – good and evil. According to this they believed in two sources of creation for the universe and said that the good things were made by Yazdan and the evil things by Ahriman. Their .purpose in this belief was to make God free from imperfection, insufficiency and evil

However, they were unaware that in this belief they were guilty of the polytheism mentioned in the previous chapter. Moreover, they were mistaken in dividing creation into two compartments – good and evil – because, if the entire order of things is examined, it becomes clear that there is no evil in the world at all, because everything .in its place has the quality of goodness

They also believed that the existence of what they called evil was distinct from the existence of what they called good, and thereby they came to the conclusion that the problem could be solved by positing two sources for the existence of the universe – a .good source for the good things and a bad source for the bad things

In fact, a more careful understanding would show that these two aspects couldn’t be separated from each other. For example: Rain is good because it

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is useful for agriculture, but some people may think that rain is bad because it ruins .houses made of mud and straw in which people live in some parts of the world

Clearly, the dualists' way cannot resolve the difficulty they raised, because the evil of rain is not divorced from its benefit. In fact there are not two existents – one good (from God), and the other bad (from another source). The holy Qur’an and Hadith show the solution. Reason would also acknowledge this solution through considering those things whose goodness cannot be perceived at a glance, such as thirst, hunger, the problems of life, mental difficulties, extreme cold and heat, poisonous animals, .etc. In fact, in the complete order of things, all is necessary and good

:For further consideration one may examine the following

The avoidance of Danger

The human body is composed of flesh and bones, which are subject to attack. Fire alone can reduce the body to ash in a short time, and the same body has no resistance to cuts and beatings one stroke, if powerful enough, can damage it .severely

.For protection of man from great dangers, God has designed several agents

۱. Thirst and hunger may, from a short-sighted point of view, appear not to be a very good thing, but, in fact, they play an important role in the economy of the human body. These feelings ensure the life of thousands of millions of cells. If man were without these sensations, the activity of the cells of his body would become

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depressed in a short time, and he would be in danger of death and, indeed, would .eventually die

۲. The sensation of pain and the sensitivity of the nerves are of the gifts of creation. In fact, the nerves of man form a very complex network of communication. With the least feeling of discomfort, they sound a bell of warning, and excite man so that he will avoid or fight the danger. If it were not for the sensation of pain, sick persons would not go for treatment. If the nerves did not feel discomfort, or ignored it, the skin and the flesh could be destroyed by fire and turned into ashes; or, if there were an .encounter with something sharp or hard, the bones could be damaged

Therefore, finding hardship in these sensations would lead to understanding that they serve as a red warning lamp, a reason for man to pay attention to the continuation of .his existence and his safety, to seek the path of health and continue his life

Difficulties and experience

Scientists say that the world of nature is the world of growth and perfection, and that these phenomena are connected with discomforts and difficulties, because hardship and difficulties give experience to the spirit and strengthen the substance of man. It is these discomforts that educate the spirit of man, for it is in the fire of difficulties that

man is tried and strengthened and his soul matured. Man's perfection must be achieved through the breaking of his complacency, so that he

.may find a way through from his inner experience to the outside world

Great men are those who have met with many ups and downs in their lives and experienced many trials and tribulations. As long as sandal-wood is not burnt it cannot .release its fragrance

Napoleon said that hardships and privations awaken and lend experience to man's intelligence. Difficulties and the bitterness of life are factors that awaken man's dormant potential. Through them man can increase his achievements in the material, .spiritual and intellectual domains

The reason that most great men are seen to come from poor circumstances is that the poor have to fight against the difference of life and this causes them to .strengthen their intelligence

The history of science and civilisation shows that progress in these fields is accompanied by difficulties and hardships. Such discomforts lead us to search for a solution, and then move us to find a more favourable situation. Therefore, those who are ignorant of the true reason why we experience hardships and discomforts and .thereby consider them to be evil they have made a mistake

Every soul has to experience the taste of death. We test you with both hardships and (blessings. In the end you will all return to Us. (۲۱:۳۵

People pray as earnestly to gain evil as one should to gain virtue. But people are (hasty. (۱۷:۱۱

You may not like something which, in fact, is for your good and something that you may love, in fact, may be evil. God knows, but you do not

(know. (۲:۲۱۶

Criteria for Good and Evil

The error of the ancient Iranians who considered extremes of heat and cold and poisonous animals to be evil lay in their taking their own physical environment as the criterion of good and bad for all the things of this world. The fact remains that benefit and harm cannot be the criterion for the good and the evil in things rather, we must .see what role everything plays in the total system of creation

This same heat and cold, which, according to their short-sightedness and their erroneous assumptions, are bad, are, on the contrary, in the view of the scholar of natural sciences who looks at the world as a unit really a benefit, and their existence is .a necessity for the growth of plants, animals and men

Those who use their own benefit and disadvantage as the criteria for good and evil in the world can be compared with the ant who might consider that man is of no use to squash ants under his foot. Or that airplanes and cars, having no us for him, were .therefore totally useless and harmful

If ants think this about man and his inventions, are they correct? Where does their error come from? Is it not because they have considered only their own situation and ?what is connected with themselves as the measure of good and evil

Again, consider those who are new to tropical coasts and think the excessive humidity which causes them to sweat and suffer the resultant discomforts to be only a

negative phenomenon preventing people from continuing their normal lives. Is this ?judgement correct

We know, in fact, that water-vapour rises up with a wind that comes from the sea coast and brings water to dry and hot areas remote from the sea, thus bringing new life to thirsty trees and moderating the intense heat, so as to enable millions of people

.to live in those areas

The mistake in this way of thinking is that those who were on the coast considered only their own situation and ignored the arrangement of existence as a whole. What is said above is followed by the conclusion that one must not assume from a cursory glance that things are useless. But that one must try to understand the effects of creation as a part of one complete system, not only in the present but also connected .with the past and the future. Only then can one be in a position to judge

Questions

?Who were Duelists .۱

(Who created the good and the bad things? (two names .۲

?What was their purpose in this belief .۳

?What roll do thirst and hunger play in the human body .۴

?What would happen if man were to be without these sensations .۵

?What would be the outcome without the sensation of pain and sensitivity .۶

?What would happen if we find the hardships in these sensations .۷

?What do scientists say about the world of nature .۸

?What must man's perfection be achieved through .۹

?What did Napoleon say about hardships and privations .۱۰

Through what can man .۱۱

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?increase his achievements in the material, spiritual and intellectual domains

?What is the reason that most great men come from poor circumstances .۱۲

What was an error made by the ancient Iranians who considered extremes of heat .۱۳
?and cold and poisonous animals to be evil

Lesson ۱۳: The Just God

point

:From previous lessons we have read and learned that

Creation and its marvellous harmony is a veritable evidence of the existence of an (۱
.Omnipotent and Omniscient God

We cannot encompass without finite minds and wisdom the Omnipotence and (۲
Omniscience of God, because what we understand. From the unique power and knowledge of God in the world of creation is only a small part of the great and magnificent totality of His creations, each one of which is evidence for His unlimited .Power and infinite Wisdom

Unlike the continual need of all creation, God is the Absolutely Needless, and He (۳
.stands in need of nothing

Because God has boundless love, He is continually bestowing His favours on his (۴
.servants

Allah is He Who made the earth a resting place for you and the heaven a canopy, and He formed you, then made goodly your form and He provided you with goodly things; .(that is Allah, your Lord, blessed then is Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. (۴۰:۶۴

One may ask if 'it is possible for God, Who bestows all these favours on his servants, to be unjust? We know that injustice stems from ignorance, weakness arrogance or .similar causes, none of which can exist in His Pure Existence

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.If we seek to find the cause for injustice, we may find the following reasons

Fear of failure .۱

When the director of a factory sees that the establishment of another factory threatens his profits, and he fears possible bankruptcy, he will do anything against his .rival, unless he is a man of active conscience and strong faith

Privation of rights .۲

Sometimes, when after much struggling someone cannot get what are his rights from an unjust person, he is led to extremes, and begins to act with all kinds of injurious acts to bring down that person. The reaction to being deprived of ones rights becomes a pretext for violence and crime in some people. When they find themselves powerful after their position of subjugation, they do what they want, and derive pleasure from killing and burning weak and helpless people. The groans of these .people are Use music to their ears, but a cause of sadness for us

Ignorance .۳

Laws, which are drawn up by human minds sometimes, cause much oppression and injustice, because man's knowledge is flint and limited and mixed with ignorance and misconceptions. So-me of the great injustice against black people can be attributed to this cause. Some people, convinced of their own superiority, and thinking that virtue and greatness depend on the colour of one's skin, ignored the rights of the black people. However, we know that the criterion for superiority and virtuousness is .knowledge and humanitarianism, and in this matter black and white are the same

These and similar results of weakness and ignorance are impossible

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for God, because He has unlimited knowledge and Power and is in need of nothing .whose loss could cause Him to be afraid. So He is incapable of any injustice

This is a very clear and obvious matter. Those who doubt this have not considered .what we have explained; or else they do not understand what justice is

?What is Justice

Justice is that everybody's rights should be respected that no distinction should be made between people for any reason. For example, in a school examination, all those who have a certain mark can move up to the next grades. Thus, the headmaster cannot make any distinction among the students and allow some of them to proceed to the next class while depriving others of this right while their marks are the same. Because creating such a distinction among students who have the same right of entry .into the higher class constitutes an injustice

But in a situation where the question of rights does not arise, and only for the goodness of the act is something given to someone, discrimination between individuals cannot he counted as injustice. For instance, if someone wishes to invite some deprived persons to a meal, and chooses only some of these unfortunates, or makes a distinction between them in inviting them. His action does not constitute injustice, because here there are no rights, which are being violated. What is given to .them is only given in Order to help them and out of a sense of doing good

The observance of equality

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anti justice is necessary when all have the same right, but where no lights exist, there can be no discussion of equality and justice, and discrimination between two .individuals cannot be called injustice

Thus those who fined difficulty in understanding the creation of things, and ask why God has not created all people equal and without distinction. And why He does not behave towards every one with equal measure, and imagine that God's Justice has been proved to non-existent and completely imaginary have not understood the real meaning of Justice. For the beings of the world have no right to claim of God that His distinguishing constitutes injustice. If Cod does not create anyone at all, or if He distinguishes between beings, nobody's rights have been violated so that we can say .that there is injustice

However, since God is Knowing and Wise, and does nothing without a good purpose,

we can ask what the reason for these distinctions among created things is. Are they unnecessary in the order of things? These questions will be answered in the following .lessons

Do not handle the property of the orphans except with a good reason until they become mature and strong. Maintain equality in your dealings by the means of measurement and balance. No soul is responsible for what is beyond its ability. Be just in your words, even if the party involved is one of your relatives and keep your promise with God. Thus does your Lord guide you so that you may take

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(heed? (۶:۱۵۲

Thus, (Muhammad), preach (My revelation) to the people and be steadfast (in your faith) as you have been commanded. Do not follow their desires but say, "I believe in the Book, which God has sent down, and I have been commanded to exercise justice among you. God is our Lord and your Lord. Each of us will be responsible for his own deeds. Let there be no disputes among us. God will bring us all together and to Him we .(shall all return." (۴۲:۱۵

Questions

?What is a proof of the existence of God according to item ۱ .۱

?Why can we not fully comprehend the power and knowledge of God .۲

?Who is always needy and who is not needy at all times and why .۳

?What does verse ۶۴ ch. ۴۰ say .۴

?Why does injustice take place .۵

Do any of the reasons for injustice mentioned in the text applies to God and why .۶ ?not

?In what way may ignorance become the cause off injustice .۷

?In what way may fear become the cause for injustice .۸

?How may deprivation become the cause for injustice .۹

?How can injustice take place in a school system .۱۰

?Why has the headmaster to treat everyone by the same standard .۱۱

?Why should everyone in school receive different degree of markings .۱۲

?Is there any example to prove that no rights are involved therein .۱۳

?Do we have any difficulty to understand the world and why .۱۴

?What does verse ۱۵۲ ch. ۶ say .۱۵

?What does verse ۱۵ ch. ۴۲ say .۱۶

What .۱۷

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?does the phrase, "no soul is responsible for what is beyond its ability", prove

?Is keeping one's promise an example of maintaining justice .۱۸

?What does the Phrase, "even if the party involved is one of your relatives", prove .۱۹

?What does the phrase, "each of us will be responsible for his own deeds", prove .۲۰

Lesson ۱۴: The Vicissitudes in the Life of Man

The Reason for Variation in the World of Creation

Certainly you will have heard of the spacecraft "Apollo", a perfect example of the marvellous progress man has made in science and technology. It took man above the clouds, beyond the atmosphere, and allowed him to set his feet on the surface of the .moon, thus opening the door to a world hitherto unknown to him

Looking at the design of this space-craft, we see a huge mass of nuts and bolts, large and small, and various delicate and complex instruments; the command module, the main craft, the lunar landing module, landing and take-off equipment, fuel tanks, telecommunication and navigational apparatus, power sources, safety devices and sufficient stores of food, water and other necessities. Each of these parts has its own role. Obviously, if it were not for these various parts, Apollo would never have come into existence, and it would not have been able to overcome the difficulties facing man on his way to the moon.

This example shows us that in a whole whose parts are connected with each other and in harmony, variety cannot be avoided.

Now let us look at the world of existence, to discover that diversity here is neither pointless nor without reason.

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Without doubt, the beauty and complexity of this world is due to the variety of its parts, and we cannot call this diversity meaningless or unjust.

In the last lesson we showed that injustice exists where all have the same right to use something equally, but distinction is made between some and others. However, the parts of the world had no existence before they were created, and so they had no pre-existent rights which would enable us to say that the existence of distinctions between them constitutes an injustice In fact, the world of creation owes its existence to variety, and if there had not been any variety there would not have been any universe, there would have been just one big uniformity. It was this variety that brought into existence atoms, solar systems, galaxies, trees, plants and animals.

Turning now towards variety in human life, we see that diversity in man is not an exception to this general principle of variety. If we look at diversity in human ability, intelligence and memory and ask why they are not the same in all humans, we must ask before this why plants and minerals do not have these superior faculties. Then we can see that neither of these questions can be properly discussed, because such

questions can only arise when rights are being trampled on. In this case, neither of these two conditions existed prior to creation that a distinction between them should .be seen as an injustice

Another point to notice is that

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God demands from everyone according to his ability and responsibility, and no one is .asked to do more than his bodily and mental powers enable him. This is justice itself

For example, if a headmaster gives the examination of the most advanced class to one of the lower classes this is an injustice. However, if he gives the easy questions to the lower class and the difficult questions to the advanced class, then no on can complain that there had been an injustice. Instead, he would be regarded as just by .any meaning of the word

Therefore, if all existent things are regarded from the same point of view, and their responsibilities were all the same, to make a distinction as regards their creation would be an injustice. But we know that responsibilities are proportional to the individual's capabilities, and thus there is no injustice. For example, if a small screw in a machine has to do the same work as the largest cog, there would be injustice; but if .each part must work according to its design and possibilities, then there is no injustice

Moreover, we believe that God is Wise and that He does nothing for no reason or for no good purpose, and we believe that the world has a special design so that no speck can come into existence without reckoning or design, as we explained in detail previously when we showed how nothing is without its place and its use. If, in some cases, something appears useless or

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without a function, it is in fact because of the limited nature of our minds. Not knowing .something does not mean it does not exist

We can conclude from this that all the variations in things have some good purpose, and that they are all perfectly useful and necessary in the system of the universe, .although we may not be able to understand this by our restricted thinking

It may be objected that all individuals may have the same characteristics, talents and abilities, but that because of the needs of society they are forced to divide their labour among themselves. The answer to this is that if this were the case, those who seek an .easy life would choose the easier occupations and the difficult

Questions

۱. What is a perfect example of the progress man has made in science and ?technology

۲. ?What makes the world have beauty and complexity

۳. ?Can we call this diversity meaningless or unjust

۴. ?What would happen if we had no variety and no universe

۵. ?Is the diversity in man and expectation to the general principal of variety

۶. ?Are memory an intelligence the same in all humans

۷. ?Does God demand from everyone accordingly

۸. Would there be any injustice if each part of something must work according to its ?design

۹. ?What can we conclude from all the variations in things

۱۰. ?Why are individuals forced to divide their labour amongst themselves

Lesson ۱۵: Prophets and Human Guidance

?What is man created for

Did God create man as part of the chain of reproduction, to be a cog m a machine, and

to

be counted only as an automaton? Was man created only for his own enjoyment? Was he created only to amass as much wealth as possible through any means, direct or devious, so as to satisfies his material wants? Is there no greater idea behind His ?creation

A large number of people regard only man's material aspect and neglect the other side of the coin, because they have not understood the profundity of the nature of man, or because they have not correctly evaluated it. Men of great understanding :have ascribed three dimensions to man

۱. Individual material life.

۲. Social life.

۳. The world of the spirit and insight.

Those who give importance only to the first dimension, and believe in absolute freedom for man, even though it be harmful for him, overlook the profound character of man and they have forgotten the other two important dimensions. Those who land importance to the first and second dimensions, but neglect the third only succeed in .creating an environment, which lacks spiritual and moral values

Arnold Toynbee the great British historian, in a long interview with the American magazine, 'Life', said that man had submitted himself to materialism, and that from that point of view we do not lack anything. However, he said, we have become bankrupt on the spiritual side of things. However, I think there is still time, he .continued, to leave this incorrect view of things and return to religion

So, a serious investigator goes further than the first two dimensions, and looks at and studies

man and the aim of creation from all three dimensions. Because the reality of man is thus, and man cannot be known in himself in any other way than this. Moreover, the third dimension gives man the power to evaluate his entrances and exits on the stage of personal and social life. This is the correct way of living. Man must reach his perfection by making his way through various dimensions, and he must find this way, .for he is created for this purpose

The question now arises of whether one's conscience can lead one through these .dimensions. Let us begin to analyse this problem with a view to finding an answer

Conscience

Some psychologists deny the existence of conscience. They believe that what is called conscience is really only the result of early childhood training On the other hand many scholars, like Rousseau, believe that there is a power hidden in the depths of man's nature which can distinguish good from bad. Children who are not under the influence of an environment, which trains them in a certain way, whose conscience has not (been perverted, can understand good and bad, basically and instinctively.(١

We can agree that a part of good and evil is according to custom; for example, dress, food and such things, which may be good at one time and place and bad m, others. But the intelligent and reasonable are governed by thinking and cannot accept that all ,goods and evil are like this, because trust, fulfilment of obligation

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See Rousseau's Emile, especially Book IV -١

help for the poor and the weak, work for humanity, brotherhood, equality and so on have deep roots in the nature of man. On the other hand deception, injustice, breaking agreements, selfishness and the like have always and in all places been condemned. One cannot, therefore, say that they came to be regarded as .instinctively bad

One must therefore accept the existence of conscience, but with the following

necessary condition: that conscience, by itself, cannot guide man completely - it needs training. It must, like minerals in the grounds, be extracted and refined. Otherwise, it may be perverted under the influence of a corrupt environment, with the result that these psychologists cannot recognise it and therefore deny its existence. .This is an indication that man needs infallible prophets

Human Ideologies

From early times up to now, man has been putting forward many ideas for the improvement of society and the individuals who it comprises. But because man is not completely aware of the secrets of spiritual and material well-being, and his ignorance is very great, he has never been able to put forward any ideas which have .been able to satisfy the full requirements of human nature

Dr. Burrows said some years ago that at Princeton he heard Einstein say that science tells us what is there, but religion tells us what should be there, and Victor Hugo said .that as much as man progresses, his need for religion becomes greater

Another difficulty with such ideologies is that whatever intelligence tells us, however right it may

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be, no guarantee can be made that we will follow its ideas. Many people know through their intelligence and knowledge that gambling, alcohol, stealing and crime are not .good, but nevertheless they fall victims to such practices

Today we see that the United Nations, with over ۱۳۰ members from countries all over the world, is a weak body whose resolutions generally remain merely in their minutes and only on paper. This is because intelligence and knowledge are no guarantee for .action

But the Divine scheme, because it comes from an unlimited source of knowledge, can have no room for error, and because it issues forth from the immaculate hearts of the prophets, it has influence on mankind. Moreover, the reward and punishment for not

carrying out His instruction causes man to implement this scheme. Alone, intelligence and thinking is not enough; a confirmation must be found through Divine assistance. These faculties are only, fields for training through the Divine discipline of the messengers so that man may reach felicity without being diverted.

Imam Ali (A.S.), in the first sermon m Nahj al-balagha explains the reason for the sending of messengers thus:

Then Allah sent His messengers and the series of His prophets to them (mankind) to make them fulfil the pledges of His creation, to recall to them His bounties, to exhort them by preaching, to unveil before them the hidden virtues of wisdom and show them the signs of His Omnipotence.

However, supposing that man has a correct ideology, do the dictators and those

who wish to enforce their own ideas allow us to distinguish the true from the false? Don't they rather try to cover the true face of ideologies? In this way people, through ignorance of correct beliefs, do not rise up against oppression and are successfully deceived. However, a law that comes from God However, a law that comes from God can be made known to all through the miracles and signs of truth which God gives to His messengers, and people can understand its truthfulness and believe in it, and will then be unable to find any excuse for disobedience.

The necessity for the sending of Messengers

a) The personal, social and spiritual perfection of man is one of the aims of creation.

b) Conscience alone is not enough for the true perfection of man.

c) Human ideologies cannot completely satisfy all the demands of man's nature, and there is no guarantee for their implementation.

d) Prophets have been sent and their prophet hoods proved through miracles so that man distinguish the truth and no-one can excuse his disobedience by saying that he

.could not find the truth

Through these four points, we discover that the prophets are necessary for the perfection of man, and that they were sent to inform man of what he requires in the way of perfection, so that they may tread the path of happiness. One cannot imagine that the Wise God could leave man without instructions, laws and obligations, or that He could leave them in the hands of tyrants, so diet they might the victims

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.of human and be prevented from reaching perfection

:'Ibn Sina wrote in 'ash-Shifa

More necessary for the continued existence of man and his essential perfection than even the growth of eyelashes and eyebrows and the concavity of the soles of the feet .is the sending of prophets by Allah

Thus, in arriving to the aim of creation and to spiritual and material perfection, God must have sent some people as messengers, as indeed we see that he has, so that .they might guide people by the radiant torch of revelation

:A tradition is related by Hisham ibn al-Hakam that

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq, in answering an atheist who had inquired about the need for the sending of prophets, said: “When we have shown that there is a Creator Who fashioned us and Who is above us and all of His creation, and that this Creator is Wise and Elevated in the sense that He did not allow His creatures to see or touch Him, so that He might be together with them, and they might be together with Him, and that He might argue with them and they might argue with Him, then it becomes clear that He has emissaries m His creation so that they can speak from His Presence to His creatures and servants, and they might guide them to their advantage and benefit and to that in which is their continued existence and in the absence of which is their extinction. So it has become evident that there are some who command and

prohibit on behalf of the Wise, the Knowing to His creation, and who speak from His Glorified Presence, and these are the prophets, and His chosen from among creation .wise and trained through wisdom, and raised in it

They are apart from man in all their conditions - in spite of sharing with him in his form and fashioning they are sustained in wisdom by the Wise, the Knowing. Then the above is evident in every epoch and en in which the messengers and prophets brought evidence and proofs so that the earth of Allah might not be deprived of a witness with whom there is a sign which refers to His Truthfulness and (Righteousness."(۱

Of course, Divine plans are not concerted on only one level. Rather they guide us from all direction. Worship, government, justice, economy, power, individual and social duties and also the general law which governs individual problems. All of these are the aims of religions and they enable man to perfect himself in all the three dimensions of .his nature

Again Divine plans do not restrict themselves to one class of society, but encompass all levels of society and uphold the rights of all people, so those who think that religion was invented by the ruling or wealthy class, and that it was invented in feudal and capitalist societies to serve the purposes of these societies are clearly wrong, .because these people have not paid proper attention to the foundation of religion

In addition to this, history bears witness

Usul al-Kafi, Kitab al-Hujjah -۱

that the upper and wealthy classes did not participates in the movements led by the prophets, and Divine religions always opposed the oppression and transgressions of .feudalistic and capitalists

Leaders, scholars, the simple and the poor, and others, all come to religion because only by its clear objectives can they satisfy the demands of their natures and emotions, and they realize that only religion can guide them to real perfection. This is .the only reason why man turn to religion

Fortunately, today, educated people are more aware of the value of religion, and they believe that real peace and perfection can only be had in the shade of religion and .belief in God

The Necessity for Miracles

After man has realised that he needs the guidance of prophets in order to reach an all-embracing happiness, and that he can only construct the glorious edifice of perfection through their instructions, he naturally feels affection for those teachers who work for his benefit and sacrifice their sinless souls for his advantage. Thus belief comes to reach such a degree that people do not spare themselves any hardship in order to advance the aims of the prophets, and they prefer the demands of the .prophets to the demands of their own souls

But this deep-rooted and comprehensive influence and importance of the prophets, and the love and belief of people in them cause some ambitious persons to take advantage of them, seeking to become influential and obtain their desires by claiming prophet

So, if someone claims prophet hood and people gather round

him, one cannot believe in him without some investigation. For it is possible that he falsely proclaims prophet hood, as many people have done up to the present day and thus collects a following order to find out if someone is a genuine prophet, this latter must bring some evidence with him so that people can be sure of him and accept his .claim. Thus the real prophets can be distinguished from the false

This evidence that distinguishes the true prophets from the false is known as

miracles, and God gave miracles to His prophets and messengers so that people could be saved from mistakes and the dangers of those who seek to deceive them, and so that the face of truth may never be hidden from people. So far we have seen that messengers must bring miracles so that people can know that they bear a message from God, and that what they say is true, and so that they may be completely .obedient to them and follow their teachings with faith and conviction

?What are Miracles

Miracles (mu'jizah) are what the prophets did according to the Will of God in order to .affirm the prophet hood they claimed, and which others are unable to copy

Miracles are only a Proof of Prophethood

A group of those who sought excuses for their lack of faith demanded various things as miracles, not through a desire to have the prophet hood confirmed, but in order to .oppose the prophets. They even asked for things that were logically impossible

However, because the prophets brought

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enough miracles they did not accede to these demands and told these people that the position of a prophet is to guide, to bring good tidings and to warn. This is why miracles are according to the Will of God and in situations where they are necessary, :as is mentioned in the Qur'an with reference to such people

(The signs are only with Allah. And Iam only a plain Warner. (۲۹:۵۰

(It was not for any Messenger to bring a sign, save by Allah's leave. (۴۰ : ۷۸

Questions

۱ . Is man created for his enjoyment, or to accumulate wealth, or just for ?reproduction

۲. ?What kind of people neglect the more important aspect of life

?Who said we must return to religion and why .۳

?What are the three dimensions of life .۴

?Can working just for one of these dimensions make people happy .۵

?What power in man distinguishes in between good and evil .۶

?Is conscience due to childhood training .۷

?What does Rousseau say about conscienceless .۸

?Are all that considered good all the time .۹

?Can you name three of the values that due not change .۱۰

?Can the power of conscience identify all that is good and evil .۱۱

?Why do we need infallible prophets .۱۲

Has man been able to put forward an idea that could satisfy all the requirements of .۱۳ ?human nature

According to Einstein what branch of knowledge answers the question of what is .۱۴ ?there

?What science answers the question of what should be there .۱۵

?What happens to the resolution of the UN .۱۶

Why is the Divine .۱۷

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?instruction of greater influence on man

?What is the reason for sending prophets according to Imam Ali .۱۸

?What facts prove the truthfulness of prophets .۱۹

?What are the reasons that necessitate the sending of Divine Messengers .۲۰*

?What do miracles do .۲۱

?Which four points through that we need Prophets for from God .۲۲

?What kind of comparison has Ibn Sina made about the need for prophets .۲۳

?What reason has Imam Al-Sadiq has given in support for the need of prophets .۲۴

?Why are miracles needed .۲۵

?What is a miracle .۲۶

Lesson ۱۶: The purity of the Prophets

(Why the Prophets must be ma'sum (Infallible

point

The Merciful and Wise God inspired the prophets, so that through their leadership and guidance human society might recognise the right way as opposed to the precipitous way, and might be able to stride up to the highest peaks of true pride, perfection, and .laudable virtues, and stay on that way

With the same intention, the Merciful and Wise God also made His prophets and messengers immune from every kind of sin and error, and, in one word, made "infallible" (ma'sum) so that they might be able to lead mankind towards real development in all directions, and towards obedience and submission to the .commands of God without any error or mistake

It is obvious that the very same reason, which prompted the need for prophethood and the sending of prophets also, requires that the prophets be immaculate and immune from all kinds of sin, impurity error and fault. Since the aim and purpose of sending prophets is to lead society towards guidance and instruction. This aim

is to be secured through the infallibility of the prophets and messengers, for it is clear that to do things which are repulsive or indecent, to sin, and also to be a source of error and fault is a reason for people to be averse to and diverted from these things, .and thus the aim, which was the guidance and instruction of society, would be lost

No people of wisdom would not do anything against their aim, and that they take regard for what is effectual in attaining and reaching their aim. For example, someone who wants a number of distinguished individuals to take part in a celebration in his honour knows that no one without an invitation can honourably attend. He will never send an invitation to someone who is averse to him, rather he will try to send his invitations in such a way that they will all be accepted, and, if he doesn't do this, his work will not have been prudent and wise, and it will be regarded as having been .unseemly and unbecoming

The Merciful and Wise God also takes account of what basically interferes with the guidance and education of society, and does not want people to depend on and follow the will of capricious and impure men, and so to end up far from, and be deprived of their true development. Therefore He has sent immaculate prophets so that the .guidance and instruction of society might be in the best possible way

The following are further

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.details why the prophets must be infallible

.The Principle of Instruction .۱

It is obvious that the purpose of sending prophets was to educate people, and that in teaching the teacher's behaviour is a more effective instrument than his speaking and .verbal instruction

The habits and deeds of the teacher can bring about a radical transformation in man due to people’s tendency to imitate, one of the indisputable fact in the working of the mind, man gradually adopts the manner and conduct of his teacher, and becomes of

the same colour so that it is as if he is the clear, limpid surface of a pool which reflects .the image of the sky above him

Speech alone cannot play the part of instruction, rather it serves instruction, and this is the idea of the prophetic mission, that prophets must possess praiseworthy habits and qualities and be untainted with sin and error so that they can effectively attract .the people of this world towards the sacred aim

It is clear that one who has soiled his hands with sin, even though in secret and without anyone being aware so that he himself remains pure in the eyes of his fellow men, will never have that unwavering strength of mind to bring about a radical .transformation in the area of the human spirit

One who taints his lips with wine can never dissuade others from drinking it, and raise .the voice of truth and establish an iron will in combating this act

The intense discomfort and disquietude of the prophets, and especially the

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noble prophet of Islam, about the sins and indecencies of people is itself the best witness to the fact that they were disgusted with every evil and were not involved in .sins at all

The great secret in the progress of the prophets was the consistency in their words and deeds, and it is this harmony which enabled them to transform the fundamentals .of human thought and lead societies toward more meaningful cultural values

.Confidence and Acceptance .۲

The greater the degree of faith and confidence that people have in a speaker, the .more their agreement with him increases, and vice versa

For this reason, the prophets, who revealed the Divine commands and restrained people from sin and immorality, must, according to this be endowed with the greatest, most admirable qualities, and be free from every kind of sin and indecency, even

error and mistakes, so that people's confidence and faith in them be greater and they may accept their guidance and what they say, and so that people may strive more assiduously in carrying out the plans and practice the reformative instructions of the prophets, and trust from the depths of their hearts their leadership. Thus the aim of the prophetic mission, that is to say the leading of people from darkness to light would be accomplished; the aim of the prophetic mission would not be obtained under any .other circumstances, and that would be very far from the wisdom of God

This purity and worthiness of the prophets was so extraordinary that people became devoted to

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them to such a degree that their followers felt great love towards them and gave up .their lives in following and obeying them, without heed for the consequences

How can a man be completely free from sin and error? The following will answer this .question

?(How can a man be ma'sum, (infallible

Real Love of God .۱

The holy prophets were deeply devoted to the Merciful Lord, God, and why should they not have been? They, who with their seeing and hearing and profound insight knew God better them anyone, who understood His greatness, glory and majesty to be above all things, who found Him alone worthy of love, honour and obedience, who had nothing in view but to please Him, who gave their hearts to none but Him, who did .everything with devotion to Him, and who knew who were they worshipping

It was for this very reason that the prophets welcomed difficulties and formidable situations, and also paid attention to God with smiling, open faces even when they were in the most critical circumstances. And so, when, in their beloved, true way, they .met with difficulties, they became overflowing with joy

History has recorded the endeavour of these heavenly, torch-bearing men of guidance as also the condemnable behaviour of people towards them. Could steadfastness in these difficulties have had another motivation apart from love of God and obedience to His commands? Certainly it did not have other motives.

How can it be imagined that those who are completely engrossed in their beloved way, and who utter nothing except according to His wish, and in whose

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heart, soul, spirit and thoughts not one corner is empty of remembrance, love and honour of Him, can disobey His commands? Or can give themselves up to sin? Rather, they followed the path of obedience to Him and were submitted totally to Him.

Someone asked the noble Prophet of Islam (as) why he applied himself to worship to such an extent with suffering and hardship since he was purified and had no sings. His answer was that why should he not be a grateful and thankful servant of God.(۱)

Amir al-mu'minin, 'Ali (A.S.) made reference to the great qualities of the Prophet of Islam when he said that the greatness of God had so deeply overwhelmed prophet Muhammad (S) with the Messengership and leadership that he was a witness for creation, the bearer of good news, and a Warner. In his childhood he was better than everyone, in his maturity more preferred, and his nature was, of all the pure ones, the purest. His bounty and his generosity were more freely showered down than that of any other benefactor.(۲)

"He is the leader of the pious, and the eyes of those who are led"(۳).

Thus, the perfect knowledge of the prophets and the deep and true love which they had for God resulted in their infallibility and absolute purity, so that, in addition to precluding sin from their will and thinking, they withheld themselves from sin.

۲. The Deep and Perfect Insight of the Prophets

Perceptiveness is not the same in everyone. Someone who is ignorant and illiterate

will never think

.Nur ath-Thaqalayn,, vol. ۳, p. ۳۶۷ -۱

.Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon ۱۱۵ -۲

.Tarikh Tabari, vol. ۵, p. ۲۲۶۹-۷۱ -۳

like a doctor does about microbes and the contamination of the blood vessels by them. A doctor who has spent years-investigating microbes, has watched their multiplication under a microscope, and has witnessed the fate of those who were .infected by them can never neglect microbes and their dangers

Thus, the ignorant person proceeds to drink water contaminated with microbes and has no worry, whereas the doctor would never be prepared to drink such water and .would never even entertain the idea

The only motive for refraining from drinking is the knowledge and information, which this doctor has concerning the bad effects of microbes. An illiterate and ignorant person would keep himself away from eating something filthy, for, in this case, he is aware of its impurity and harmful effects. But a child into whose reach a filthy thing .may fell would probably put it into his mouth

Some people who attach little importance to incremental harm, although they fear sudden, unexpected dangers and avoid them. Someone may he rather lazy about extracting a decayed tooth and may procrastinate about consulting a dentist, till his other teeth also become affected, and a great deal more discomfort comes his way. He is now affected by very serious ailments. However, the very same person, as soon as the pain of appendicitis appears and there is a possibility of real danger, will entrust .himself to the hands of a surgeon with all haste

If knowledgeable doctor becomes addicted to alcohol, it can only be because he is not

fully informed of the damage of alcohol to the spirit and the soul, and because its accumulative harm becomes obscured through his appetite and his desire to gratify .himself

Ordinary people take a superficial view of evil, and do not take sufficient note of its .physical and spiritual, bodily and psychic effects

However, the prophets, who, with the help of a higher power, have supremacy in their vision and knowledge over the rest of mankind who have a profound and perfect insight into all the effects of evil, and who, by a secret witnessing, see even those effects of evil which will materialize in the next world, will never come under the influence of their own bodily desires and soil their hands with the contamination of .sin; even the thought of it will never enter their hearts

The prophets saw the effects of sin in the intermediary and next worlds, and gave an account of them to people, and many hadith, reports have been recorded from the :great Prophet of Islam on this subject of which the followings are a few

Amir al-mu'minin, 'Ali (A.S.) said, “I and Fatimah (A.S.) went to the Prophet. We saw “ that he was weeping excessively. I said, “may God take my father and mother’s souls in service to protect you from hardships, why are you weeping?” He said, “The night they took me ton mi'raj, I saw a group of women from my followers in severe torment. One woman I saw hung up by her hair, and the

brain in her head was boiling from the intensity of the heat. Another was strung up by .her tongue, and they were pouring caustic water into her throat

Another was eating the flesh of her body and fire was burning under her feet. Another one had her hands and feet bound, and the snakes and scorpions of Hell were crawling over her. Another one, the flesh of her body was being cut up with flaming scissors. Another one had grown the face of a dog and fire was entering her from underneath and coming out of her mouth, and the angels of punishment were striking

her with heated clubs on her head and her body." Fatimah (A.S.), the daughter of the Prophet (S), asked, "What had these women done that Allah punished them in this '?way

The great Prophet (S) replied, "'The one who was hung up by her hair had not, in this" world, concealed her hair from strangers, and the one who was strung up by her tongue had tormented her husband, and the one who was eating flesh of her own body had beautified herself for strangers, and the one whose hands and feet were bound and over whom snakes and scorpions crawled had given no importance to wudu and the purity of her clothes, nor to ghusl, (taking shower) after sexual impurity and ghusl after menstruation, and had counted her prayers as nothing, but the one whose flesh was cut by scissors was a woman who had

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given herself to the will of unfamiliar and strange men, and the one who had grown the face of a dog and whom fire entered from underneath and came out of her mouth had been a singer of falsehood. Then the holy Prophet said, "Woe to that woman who made her husband angry and how good it is for the case of that woman whose (husband is happy because of her."(١)

Questions

?What kinds of characteristics does Allah want man to have .١

?Why did Allah bring up the Prophets as infallible people .٢

?Why does Allah send immaculate Prophets .٣

?What is the purpose of the prophets .۴

?What can the habits of teachers do to the students .۵

?Can speech alone be more affective or habit and speech together .۶

?Can a transgressor be a good teacher .٧

?Can a sin be attractive to an infallible person .۸

?Can people have more trust in truthful persons, or in a not so truthful person .۹

?What affect did the purity of the character of the prophet produce .۱۰

?What has love of God to do with their infallibility .۱۱

?Why could the prophet endure so much suffering for the cause of God .۱۲

The presence of what fact in every corner of one's soul prevents one from . ۱۳ ?displeasing God

?What does sermon ۱۱۵ of Nahjul Balagha say about the Holy Prophet .۱۴

?Do the ignorant people make more mistakes or the wise and learned ones .۱۵

Can people of knowledge, wisdom, and vision be better off against sins or the . ۱۶ illiterate lazy and

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.Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar; vol. ۱۸, p. ۳۵۱ -۱

?pleasure seeking ones

?What was happening to who the prophet saw in mi'raj by her hair and why .۱۷

?What was happening to the women strung up by her tongue and why .۱۸

?What was happening to the women whose hand and feet were bound and why .۱۹

?Was happening to the women whose flesh was being cut and why .۲۰

?What had happened to the lady whose face grew into a dog and why .۲۱

Lesson ۱۷: Hazrat Musa (A.S.) He to whom Allah spoke

point

At the same time as Hazrat Musa (a.s.) was born, two large tribes, the Copts and the Israelites, were living in Egypt. The Pharaohs, who were the rulers in Egypt, were Copts, but the Israelites were from the lineage of Ya'qub (Jacob), and had the name of Bani Isra'il. The original birthplace of the Bani Isra'il was Can'an, but after Yusuf (Joseph), from among these people, reached great rank in Egypt, they also came to Egypt and remained there. In the beginning, their number was not very great, but gradually they became more and more numerous until they became a social group in .their own right, and they held great esteem

But with the death of Yusuf, and also because of their inadmissible disobedience, they forfeited their esteem and glory. The Copts became their rulers and exploited them, and assigned arduous and difficult work to them, and did not hold themselves back .from any kind of oppression and violence

The monarch of Egypt, who was named 'Pharaoh' and was a Copt, had dipped his fingers in the blood of

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the Israelites and had so much power that fighting with him was out of the question. Due to excessive egotism he called himself 'god', and lead the people towards .worship of him and to polytheism and idolatry

Pharaoh was heedless of the fact that Allah was looking after the people with the light of His guidance, and he did not understand that it was the inveterate practice of Allah that whenever he set up a prophet, he delivered the people from ignorance, .oppression and cruelty

A soothsayer told Pharaoh that a child from Bani Isra'il would soon come into the world who would be a danger for his sovereignty. Pharaoh flew into a rage and gave an order without delay to cut off the head of every boy in Bani Isra'il, and to see that .no male child remained to them

.In the middle of all this, Hazrat Musa (a.s.) was born

When the fear of danger had gone, his mother, with all the love she had for him, placed her dear newborn baby into a box, according to Divine inspiration, and committed him to the waves of the river Nile, and the water took the box away with itself.

Pharaoh and his wife, at their residence on the banks of the Nile, were gazing into the river when they caught sight of the box with the infant, who was sleeping peacefully atop the troubled waves. When Pharaoh's wife saw that child's pure face, her heart was uneasy about casting him back into the river.

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She looked at him and liked him; her heart was seized with love for him, and she pleaded with Pharaoh to allow them to look after him in the palace and to consider him as their child. Pharaoh also became glad and hoped that his adopted child would one day be useful for him, and bring him some benefit.

The suckling infant would not accept to be breast-fed from any wet-nurse and this became a problem. In the end the mother of Hazrat Musa (a.s.), whose breasts were full of his milk, and who was looking for Musa came into the court of Pharaoh as a wet-nurse, took Musa to her bosom and suckled him.(۱)

How amazing it seems - Pharaoh brought up his incomparable enemy in his own lap! And thus Hazrat Musa (a.s.) grew up and came to maturity, and God made him acquire his share of knowledge and wisdom. He saw all the oppression and injustice in Pharaoh's cruel administration; but, not only did he not participate in it, but also he suffered from seeing the injustice, and began to look for a remedy.

One day, as he was walking along, he saw one of Pharaoh's men struggling with a man of Bani Isra'il and tormenting him. As soon as the Israelite saw Hazrat Musa (as) he called him to help him. Musa rushed forward and struck the man of Pharaoh hard with his fist, and accidentally, as a result of his blow, the man died.

(Hazrat Musa (a s

.Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar vol. ۱۳, p. ۳۸-۴۰ -۱

went far from that place, but the next day he again saw the same person from the previous day fighting with another of Pharaoh's men. Again this man called for Hazrat Musa's help, but Musa said to him angrily that he was a deluded person, i.e. that he was making a mistake by fighting with one of Pharaoh's men every day, which was dangerous for everyone. Then he went forward and pushed him aside. The Israelite thinking that Musa wanted to hit him, shouted at him, "Do you want to kill me, like the "?man yesterday

After these events, Hazrat Musa (as.) was anxiously on his guard, but it became clear to Pharaoh's people that the killer of that man was none other than Musa and (therefore Pharaoh gave an order for the death of Hazrat Musa (as

The officials began to hunt for Hazrat Musa (as) and he lived in fear and apprehension. A benevolent God-worshipper advised him that the sooner he left the .town the better it would be, because the men of Pharaoh were seeking to kill him

Unhappily, Hazrat Musa (a.s.) came out of Egypt and went towards Median, thus .saving himself from the oppressors and seeking the friends of Allah

(O Lord, Deliver me from the unjust people. (۲۸:۲۱

At long last Hazrat Musa (a.s.) entered Midian, and, in order to rest, he stopped beside a well. Around the well he saw many men who were watering their animals A little further away from the crowd of men, he saw

two women who were standing waiting with their sheep. Hazrat Musa (a.s.) went forward to help them, and inquired the reason for their waiting. They said, "Our father is an old man of many years, and we have to give water to the sheep ourselves. Now we are waiting till the crowd goes away from around the well and we can quench the

".thirst of our sheep

Hazrat Musa (as) went forward and watered the sheep. And the women resumed home. Musa, who was very tired and hungry and had no provisions with him, sat down :in the shade and asked God to take away his hunger

(O my Lord, truly I stand in need of any good Thou would send to me. (۲۸:۲۴

It was not long before one of these two girls returned. Walking very shyly, and said to Hazrat Musa (a.s.), "My father calls you so that he may give you remuneration for the ".work you did

.The Father of the girls was Shu'aib (a.s.), one of the prophets of Allah

Hazrat Musa (a.s.) got up and went with the girl. On the way he asked to go ahead of her, and told her to direct him from behind because he was from a family (the family .of the prophets) who did not cast their eyes on the body of a woman from behind

And in this way he came to Hazrat Shu'aib and related his story to him Shu'aib consoled him and said, "Do not fear, again you have been saved from

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".the talons of the oppressor

The same daughter who had followed Hazrat Musa (a.s.) said to Hazrat Shu'aib (as), "O Father, please engage this man in your service, for he is robust, strong, ".trustworthy and honest

Hazrat Shu'aib (a.s.) who was aware of Hazrat Muse's honesty and virtuousness, gave one of his two daughters as a wife to him. Musa made an arrangement with him that he would take sanctuary with Shu'aib for ten years, and that in that time he would (carry out Shu'aibs work, especially being a shepherd and keep his flocks.(۱

At the end of the ten years, Hazrat Musa set out with his family towards Egypt. On the way, one cold and dark night, they lost themselves everywhere was dark. The road

was indistinguishable in the wilderness. Hazrat Musa (a.s.) and his family remained wandering about. His eyes caught sight of a fire. He said to his wife, "Stay here, and I will go towards that fire, perhaps I will come across someone to guide us, or I can ".take an ember from the fire and bring it here

He hastened towards the fire. And when he reached it, this voice called him from the .direction of a tree

(O Musa, Verity I am Allah, the Lord of the World, (۲۸:۳۰

I have chosen you as a prophet, so listen to what is revealed to you. I am the Unique God, and there is no god apart from ۱. Worship me alone, and establish prayer so that .you may remember Me

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.Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. ۴, p. ۱۱۷ -۱

The resurrection is sure to come...so that every soul may be recompensed as he (strives. (۲۰: ۱۳-۱۵

Hazrat Musa (a.s.) had a staff in his hand, which he used as a crook and also to help him shake and pull off leaves from branches for his sheep. In this revelation, he was given the command to cast down his staff on the ground, and his staff immediately formed into a running serpent. Hazrat Musa (a.s.) was afraid and started to run away. Because of his fear he did not even look back. But a call came to return him, "Don't be ."afraid, be calm

His heart quieted and he turned back, and according to God's command he stretched out his hand and grabbed the serpent. Following the will of Allah, it changed back into a staff. He was then told to place his hand under his arm and then to pull it out again. .(When he had done this, he saw his hand bright white (but not ill

A white-coloured light radiated from his hand, but in a way that did not hurt the eyes. These were the miracles of Hazrat Musa (a.s.); God had equipped him with these

signs so that Pharaoh and his people would not doubt his prophethood These powers were granted to him so that they would not think that he was pretending on his own .to be a prophet

Then Allah commanded him to declare to Pharaoh that his Messengership had .commenced

At first, Hazrat Musa (a.s.) informed

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Pharaoh of his prophethood with sweet words and invited him to the worship of Allah and asked him if he wished to have a meritorious and clean spirit, if he wanted Musa .to guide him towards his God

"?Pharaoh asked, "Who is your God

Hazrat Musa (a.s.) replied, "My God is He who created the heaven and the earth. He it ".is who created all things

Pharaoh became incensed at this, and turned towards Hazrat Musa (a.s.) and said, "I have no evidence from you of the existence of another god apart from myself, and as "!for you, Musa, if you do not worship me, there will be a punishment for you

Hazrat Musa (a.s.) replied, "If I bring you evidence from God himself for you, what will "?you say

Pharaoh asked, "What are they? Where are the evidence? Bring them if you speak the "!truth

Hazrat Musa (a.s.) threw down his staff, his crook, and it became a serpent. He place his hand under his arm and took it out, and it shone into Pharaoh's eyes with a pure white light. Pharaoh was amazed. On one side were Hazrat Musa and the God of Hazrat Musa and His signs; on the other side were his sovereignty and kingship, and his monopolistic command over Egypt and the Egyptians. Pharaoh's egotism kept him back from, submitting to Hazrat Musa (a.s.), but there remained the difficulty of the

signs. He said to himself, “How will it be if I call him a magician and a sorcerer?” and it

:was with this fiction that he spoke to his bewildered votaries

Behold, Here is a magician who wishes to turn you from your lands and to usurp your“ “ ?place. What do you say

They said that he should invite observers and magicians so that they might prevail .over him, expose his sorcery and disgrace him

Pharaoh agreed, and at his commands all the old sorcerers who excelled at that time gathered together. In this huge assembly Pharaoh promised that if they prevailed .over Musa they could have anything they wanted from him

So with this juvenile idea that they could degrade Hazrat Musa and make him seem wretched, and thereby increase their standing with Pharaoh. They cast down their sticks and ropes on the ground With the magic that they performed, these sticks and ropes became snakes as if they were slithering about in front of people who were witnesses to this day of trial. Their mouths fell open in amazement. But Hazrat Musa (a.s.) was with God, or rather, better still, God was with Hazrat Musa (a.s.), and his turn came. He cast his simple staff down beside the multitude of spells and wizardry of Pharaoh’s magicians, and everyone saw that staff turn into a ferocious serpent which circled round and swallowed all the fabrications of the sorcerers, as if you would have .said there had never been anything there

First and foremost, then, were the magicians who came to believe in Hazrat Musa (a.s.). All of them, with one heart and one

voice, said, “We believe in the Lord of the worlds who is the God of Hazrat Musa and (Harun.”(١)

They fell down and prostrated themselves, and begged forgiveness for what they had

.done

Pharaoh's rage increased He threatened them. But they, who knew the difference between magic and miracle better than anyone else, thoroughly understood that Hazrat Musa (a.s.) was not a magician, and that his power was the power of God, and for this reason they were not afraid of Pharaoh's threat. Pharaoh shouted at them, "How dare you believe in the God of Musa without my permission I will tear off your "!arms and legs; I will hang you from the branches of the date-palm

The wretched creature imagined that in their own beliefs people were also obliged to get his permission. The magicians replied, "We will not choose you over and above a God who created us; we will return to our God; we are the first group who believed in Musa; we hope for God's forgiveness. Whatever you want to do, do it; for we know ".perfectly well that this world does not last

But this heated speech went without effect on the cold hearts of Pharaoh and his .followers. Their own status and manifestation of power deceived them

They captured Bani Isra'il; those women from whom there was no danger were left alive and were put to work. The boys and youths of that people were killed. Many times God demonstrated the weakness of Pharaoh's people, and made them

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Harun was the brother of Hazrat Musa (a.s.) With his loud clear voice he went - ١ together with Hazrat Musa (a.s.) everywhere and helped him in his work of delivering .the Message

despicable so that they would learn their lesson. Every time a calamity came, they sent a message to Hazrat Musa (a.s.) that if God would take the calamity away, they would believe in Him; but when the calamity was removed, they forgot their message, .and committed another iniquity

Pharaoh said to his own people, "Don't fear! Let me kill Musa. I worry least he take

your religion away from you, and I am afraid that he will create a revolution in this country and bring about a disaster.”

Hazrat Musa (a.s.) said, “I seek refuge with God from every rebel who does not believe in the resurrection.”

In the middle of all this, a man appeared who, until then, had kept his faith hidden; heedless of the people, he raised his voice and said, “Do you want to kill a man who says God is his Lord? Do you not see the signs of the existence of God which he has brought with him?”

Pharaoh announced. “It is as I have spoken!”

Again this solitary believer warned people, saying that he was frightened that their fate would be the same as the fate of the people of Nuh, or 'Ad and Thamud that he was afraid they would end up in Hell and the Fire, and that no-one would be able to save them from the punishment of their God.

Paying no attention to this man's warning, Pharaoh thought about his own plans and said in mockery to Harun, who was his minister, “Build a large

p: ١١١

tower for me so that I may get to know the ways of heaven from the top of it. May be there I will capture the God of Musa!”

But the man who had a strong faith in God went on repeating his same warnings. He said, “Follow me! I will lead you to the right path, O my people! The life of this world is ephemeral; do not be proud of it. The next world is eternal; the next world is everlasting. All the deeds of man will be investigated. The bad deeds will be punished, and the good deeds will receive a reward The reward for good is eternal Paradise. O people, I call you to salvation, why do you invite me to the Fire?

“You want me to become an incomparable unbeliever in God and further to ascribe partners to him, but I call you towards God, Who in truth is bountiful and the master of

power. It is God who will return all of us towards Himself

All of those who see the truth and understand it but do not obey it will be in the Fire.“ ”.There will be no tardiness; what I say will take place soon

Pharaoh and his worshippers did not turn back from their way after this speech. God took the fearless believer under his own protection and increased the difficulties for .Pharaoh's own men

In the end God gave the command to Musa to take the oppressed masses out of Egypt by night. Hazrat Musa

a.s.) led Bani Isra'il out in the darkness. They set off in the direction of the Red Sea. In) their hearts they feared least Pharaoh should pursue them with his might, and in fact that is what happened. Pharaoh set out in pursuit of Hazrat Musa with his army. Bani Isra'il saw that mighty force and became very uneasy. No solution could be found. On the one side was the sea, coast to coast there was water; on the other side was Pharaoh with his immense army. Musa sought refuge with God and he revealed to .him that he should strike his staff on the water and take it off

This staff became the manifestation of the power of Allah. Hazrat Musa (a.s.) struck his stick on the water. In an instant, a dry, smooth way was opened up. Ban Isra'il followed Musa on this way. The water on the two sides of the way was piled up like two walls, mound upon mound, and did not spill over. Bani Isra'il came out of the water, and Pharaoh came up to it with his forces. He was wondering what he should do: should he turn back or entrust his soul to the sea. In front of him he saw Hazrat Musa (a.s.) and his people; how had they set foot in the water and passed through it in ?safety

But he did not have faith in the clear sign of the power of Allah. He commanded his forces to pass through the

water in the same way as had Muse’s people. All of them obeyed him and entered the sea. They rushed in to capture Hazrat Musa (a.s.) - peace be upon him - and his people. They were drunk with the wine of pride. All at once the walls closed in on them. The way became a well; the ocean enveloped them on all sides. Pharaoh, seeing himself without hope, became a believer, but it was too late. All were drowned .in the sea, all were annihilated, and their memory obliterated

The Qur'an relates the situation of the last moments of Pharaoh's life with exactitude. :It says

At length, when he (Pharaoh) was overwhelmed with the flood he said, “I believe that“ there is no god except Him Whom Bani Isra'il believe in. I am of those who submit. (It was said to him) “Why now, Just a little while before you were in rebellion and you did mischief! This day we save you in your body,(١) that you may become a sign to those who will come after you. But verily, many among mankind are heedless of the signs of .(our power.” (١٠: ٩٠-٩١

.Thus was Bani Isra'il saved from the sea

If Hazrat Musa (a.s.) had become free from the spectra of Pharaoh and his oppression, there was now a grave concern for him, and that was the ignorance and propensity for dispute among the Bani Isra'il itself. On the other side of the sea they reached a people who worshipped

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Pharaoh was the general name for the rulers of ancient Egypt. The Pharaoh - ١ contemporary with Musa was called 'Ramses II' and his body was mummified. It was (.discovered in ١٨٨١ (AD) and is now in Cairo Museum

idols, and Bani Isra'il begged Hazrat Musa (as.) to build an idol for them so that they might not be in any way, even in idol- worship, inferior to them. Hazrat Musa (a.s.) was very grieved by this and said, “How ignorant and unknowing you are? Do you expect me to look for another god apart from He who delivered you from the grip of

?Pharaoh

God summoned Hazrat Musa (a.s.) to spend thirty nights for people in prayer. Hazrat Musa (a.s.) appointed Hazrat Harun (a.s.), his own brother, in his place for Bani Isra'il and recommended him to the people. After thirty nights following the command of Allah, he added to them another ten nights After the completion of these forty nights, the Torah was revealed to him, that it should be a guide at that time for the Jewish .people

However, as for Bani Isra'il, after they had been a few days without Hazrat Musa (as), the excuse of the idol seized them again. An impostor called Samiri took gold and jewellery from them and built a golden calf, in such a way that in special conditions, by its own contrivance, it emitted the sound of the calf. Then he said to the people, whose wisdom was only in their eyes, "This calf is the son of the God of Musa, it is your ".god, you must worship it

The people had forgotten that God could not be in the form of a body, could not be in ,space and they

had forgotten that God must be their guide. Contrary to the teachings of Hazrat Musa (a.s.), they accepted as god the golden calf which had been built at the hands of Samiri, and which had no benefit or loss for anyone. They did not pay attention to the fact that it was an idol built by Samiri for them which merely made a cow-like lowing, and did not realize that if it were possible that God should manifest himself among them, He would proceed to guide them and lead them. It is clear that there is an .enormous difference between guidance and leading and the braying of a calf

.(Thus the Jews went astray and heeded not the advice of Hazrat Harun (s

When Hazrat Musa (a.s.) came back and saw their great aberration, he became .completely dejected and rebuked the ignorant people

He told Samiri, "Now, you idol-builder who was built by God, what shall I do with you?

That idol, I shall have it burnt and its ashes flung into the sea. And your True God is the only God, Who sees and knows everything that is, and there is no god apart from ".him

.And with these words he broke the idol into pieces and no trace of it remained

The Divine words of Hazrat Musa (a.s.) had failed to have their effect; the people still looked for excuses, and renegade on their pledges. After Hazrat Musa (a.s.), they became less obedient to the Truth and to the words of God's prophets

and His chosen ones. They remained heedless. They oppressed some people, and they killed the prophets. They even got to work on their own Divine Book, and altered it, and thus they created the Torah in its present form, whose imperfections are so .great that one cannot call it a Divine Book

Questions

?Which two tribe were living in Egypt at the time of Hazrat Musa's birth .۱

?Which tribe did the Pharaohs belong to .۲

?Which tribe did the lineage of Yacub belong to .۳

Why did the Pharaoh order the entire babies head to be cut off from the Bani Isra'il .۴ ?tribe

?Why was the order given to kill Musa .۵

?What happened when Musa reached the bush .۶

?What happened when Musa threw down his staff .۷

?What did Allah command Musa to declare to the Pharaoh .۸

?What did Musa say when Pharaoh asked him who is you God .۹

What did the people immediately do when they saw the miracles Musa showed .١٠ ?them

?What did pharaoh say to the people as a threat when the prostrated before Musa .١١

?Who was Harun .١٢

?When Hazrat Musa went with his followers to the Red Sea what did pharaoh do .١٣

?What happened when Musa struck his staff in the water .١۴

?What happened when Pharaoh and his men enter the sea .١۵

?What did the imposter Samiri do .١۶

?What was the idol in the shape of .١٧

?What did Musa do when he saw what the people were doing when he returned .١٨

?What did Musa do with the Idol .١٩

What did .٢٠

?the people do after Musa's death

(.Lesson ١٨: Hazrat 'Isa Jesus (a.s

point

The Messiah, The Messenger, and Servant of Allah

Maryam, the mother of Isa

The wife of Imran was a barren and sterile woman, but she heard from her husband that God had promised him a boy who would be able to bring people to life and to cure (the sick as well through the power and command of God.(١

.She believed that Almighty God could do this, and prayed to Him to give her the child

God granted her prayer and she became pregnant. As a sign of thankfulness for this great blessing and gift, she vowed that she would give her child to the service of the (House of God (in Jerusalem).(٢

The child who was born was a girl, and when her mother saw her she said, "This is a girl, but I will be faithful to my vow; I will call her Maryam She and her children, I (commend to Your protection from the mischief of Satan."(٣

The wife of Imran took Maryam to the House of God. She entrusted her to the custodians of that place. Since the infant was the daughter of their leader, Imran everyone wanted to pay for her upbringing and guardianship so that the honour of having looked after the daughter of Imran would fall on him. In the end a dispute .arose between them, and to resolve their differences they drew lots

Among the custodians of the House of God the draw came out in favor of Hazrat Zakariyya. So Maryam came

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.Majma al-bayan vol. ٢, p. ۴٣۵ -١

.See ٣:٣۴ -٢

.See ٣:٣۴-٣۵ -٣

under the tutelage and supervision of Hazrat Zakariyya and she gradually grew up (engaged in nothing but worship and serving the House of God.(١

Her purity and devotion reached such a stage that whenever Hazrat Zakariyya (a.s.) went into Maryam's sanctuary; he found heavenly food beside her. He would ask in ,surprise, "Where does this food come from?"Maryam would reply

(From Allah; truly Allah gives to everyone who He wants without reckoning." (٣:٣٧"

Zakariyya and Yahya

The wife of Zakaryya (a.s.) was also, like the mother of Maryam barren, and for this reason Zakaryya had been without children till his old age. At that time when Zakaryya (as) was looking after the spiritual advancement of Maryam in her sanctuary and saw the infinite mercy of God towards her, he was taken with the desire to have a pious child like Maryam. So he raised his hands in supplication ,towards God and said

O God, I wish you to grant me a pure and pious child a child who will be a source of" (satisfaction to me, the inheritor of me and the House Of Ya'qub." (۳:۳۸, ۱۹:۱-۶

Hazrat Zakaryya (a.s.) was engaged in prayer in the sanctuary when angels said to him, "God gives you glad tidings of a child called Yahya who is of the righteous and ".devout prophets

Hazrat Zakaryya (a.s.) who was himself old and weary and saw the barrenness and sterility of his wife (and to become pregnant in such conditions was a gift which could not be expected). He said with delight

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.Majma al-bayan vol. ۲, p. ۴۳۶ -۱

and surprise, "O God, in the state I and my wife are in, how can you grant me the "?favour of a child

In answer to this it was said, "This work is easy for God. Did God the Almighty not " ?bring you forth from non-existence into being

Thus Hazrat Zakaryya (a.s.) became one of the Divine prophets and throughout the whole of his life he called people to faith and salvation. In the end he was martyred by one of the kings of Bani Isra'il who wanted to marry the daughter of his own brother (against the law of God, and to whom Hazrat Yahya had forbidden this.(۱

Isa, Jesus, the Messiah'

One day, Maryam(۲) the girl who had grown up from infancy in the House of God and whose upbringing a prophet of the stature of Zakaryya had undertaken was engaged .in worship when an angel appeared to her in the form of a man

Maryam thought that he was a man, and in fear sought protection from God, but the angel gave her glad tidings, "I have come from your God to give you a pure and " .perfect son

Maryam said, "How, since no man has had contact with me and I am not a ".fornicatress

Your God," said the angel, says that this work is easy for Him; that it may be" ".appointed as a sign and an indication of His Mercy

So Maryam became pregnant, and, since she had no husband some gossipers began to make obscene comments about her, and she became

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.Allamah at-Tabataba'i Tafsir Al-mizan vol. ۱۴, p. ۲۶-۲۷ -۱
See Holy Qur'an, ۱۹-۱۶-۳۲ -۲

grieved so as to be free from these afflictions she took herself far from people, and .had to go to a remote place. There she counted the days until the birth of her child

At last, when the time of delivery arrived, she took refuge from her pain under a dry date palm in the desert, and in that very place she delivered her baby into the world .without any mid-wife or nurse

Loneliness fear of disgrace and the thought of how she would prove her chastity to people filled Maryam with so much anxiety that she said to herself, "Would that I had ".died before this and had been lost from people's memories

Then she heard a voice, which consoled her, "Do not grieve, your God has set under your feet a stream, refreshing to the soul. And shake the trunk of the withered date

palm that fresh dates may tumble down for you. Eat, drink and calm your mind, and if you see any man point and say, "I have vowed a silent fast, and today I will not speak ".to any man

Miracles and unseen help, one after the other made Maryam courageous. So, because of this tranquility, she took her child back with her to the place where she had been living. When the people saw Maryam with the child clutched to her bosom, they began to chide her, and said, "Your father was not a bad man, nor was your mother ".unchaste

Without speaking, Maryam pointed to her child. That

.meant: ask from him what has happened, and you will get your answer

.How shall we speak to a child of that age!" they said in amazement"

But Maryam's child spoke through the power of God, and in clear distinct speech said, "I am God's servant. He has given me the Book and has appointed me to be a prophet. And wherever I may be He has put me as the bearer of good news and with His blessing; and He has commanded me that as long as I live I should pray and give ".zakat and he has made me loving towards my mother Maryam

The clear mind of this child dumbfounded them and this great sign dispelled their incrimination of and suspicion toward Hazrat Maryam (As) and they knew that this infant was brought into existence by the Will of God without a father. And that in the .future he would have great rank and responsibility

(.Description of the Condition of People Before the Message of Hazrat 'Isa, Jesus (a.s

Before the birth of the Messiah, Palestine was in the hand of the Romans. But the people of Palestine, although they had no support to help them to eventual emancipation, were engage' in a struggle with the alien Romans. This continuous fight .worsened the condition of Palestine and its people

The economy was in a shambles and heavy oppressive taxes added to the evil. Free people were either anxious and in chains or were engaged in a life long struggle. Prosperous places came to a standstill and everything fell into ruin and became weakened even the faith

p: ۱۲۲

of the Jews themselves, so that they no longer abided by the commands of their .religion

Perhaps this weakness of faith was a present for Roman colonisation from the people. Colonialism always has and always will use this gift, because in this kind of struggle the enemy has no need of arms. People who neglect and give up their faith, without .their knowing, will be gradually annihilated

Under these circumstances, in that time full of disturbance and agitation, the need was thoroughly felt for Divine leader to come and save the deviated people from their .misfortunes and aberrations

And thus it was that, with the expediency of the love and mercy of Allah, the Compassionate, Hazrat Isa (a.s.) came into this world. The birth of this beloved one was accompanied by wonders, all witnessed to his exalted and magnificent rank. These were Divine signs that he was God's leader and that the strong hand of God .had brought him into existence to establish the great revolution

(.The Message of the Messiah (a.s

The Injil descended to the person of Hazrat Isa (a.s.) to be a plan for the liberation of those who were lost. The revealed Injil (gospel) has disappeared and the Gospel .which are now in the possession of the (Christians are not revealed books

Hazrat Isa (a.s.) announced his prophetic message and started his activities on a large scale. He took great pains and sacrificed himself to save the Jews and to exterminate .the roots of their deviations

But the leaders of the Jews, who clung to their position

and rank, and who thought that these would be destroyed by the coming of Hazrat 'Isa and feared his prophetic mission, plotted together to find ways to create a disturbance to check his progress.

Hazrat Isa (a.s.) was aware of their designs, but he was as steady as a rock, and thus dispensed his guidance and leadership, and informed the people of the superstitions and distortions that had crept into the religion of Hazrat Musa (a.s.).

Sometimes, while he was doing this, he would cure a sick person by the leave of God, or, similarly by His leave, bring to life a dead person, so that they would understand that he had come from God and had been sent by the Unique and Incomparable God.

The End of the Mission of the Messiah (a.s.)

Day by day, Hazrat Isa's friends and followers increased, and the more they increased the more the opposition of the leaders of the Jews increased, to such an extent that they decided to do away with him.

But God concealed him from their eyes, and they crucified another by mistake who resembled Hazrat 'Isa (a.s.), and thus they believed in their error that they had crucified Hazrat 'Isa (a.s.). This fact has been explicitly stated in the Holy Qur'an:

But they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them; and those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no certain knowledge but only conjecture to follow. For a surety they killed him not Nay, Allah raised him up unto Himself; and Allah

is Exalted in Power and Wise. (۴:۱۵۷-۱۵۸)

Therefore, the matters of the cross and the illogical embellishment, which were

added to this matter are all without any foundation. For example, the Christians today say that every man is, in his essence, a sinner, although he may not have committed any sin during the whole of his life. That is why Hazrat 'Isa (a.s.) was crucified in the place of these men so that they might be spared the torment of Hell and its Fire. And that is why the Marcion and the Gnostics did not believe in the killing or crucifixion of .the Messiah

Hazrat Isa Messiah, or the Slave of Cod

What is clear from the Holy Qur’an and even from some of the New Testament which is at present in the possession of the Christians is that the Messiah always considered himself as God's slave, worshipped God, and called people to the worship of the One (.God. (The Gospel according to St. Mark ch. ۱۲, v. ۲۹

:Hazrat Isa (a.s.) said

It is Allah, Who is my Lord and your Lord; then worship Him. This is a way that is“ (straight.” (۳:۵۱

Hazrat Isa (a.s.) never claimed to be a god, and if Christians know him and consider .him as God, then it is their own imagining

Nehru, in his book Glimpses of World History, wrote that the Messiah was never a claimant to divinity or to being a god, but that people like to turn their heroes into a .kind of god

Hazrat Isa (a.s.) was, like other prophets, a man to

p: ۱۲۵

whom revelation came from God and who was moved to lead and guide society. If he had a miracle, other prophets also had miracles. If he was born without a father, Hazrat Adam (a.s.) was also created without a father or a mother, but no Christian .thinks that he was the Son of God

:The Qur’an says

The Messiah, son of Maryam, was no more than a messenger many were the messengers who passed away before him. His mother was a woman of truth. They .(had both to eat their daily food. (۵:۷۵

.Like all other human beings, they were in need of the necessities of life

This truth, which has come in the clear word of Allah – the Qur’an – agrees with both wisdom and the intellect, because a man, who, like other individuals, has no power from himself, and thus like other men and prophets is in need of the necessities of life like food and sleep. By the Judgement of wisdom, he does not deserve to be .worshipped

So, according to the intellect, and with the confirmation of the Holy Qur’an according to the existing New Testament (Gospel of St. Mark), and on the evidence of great historians, Hazrat Isa (a.s.) was the slave and messenger of God, and never laid claim .to divinity

But after Hazrat Isa (a.s.), his pure religion lost its genuineness and polytheism and idolatry found its way into it, so that Will Durant in his 'History of Civilization; has written that Christianity did not eradicate polytheism, but

.has rather adopted it

Everyone who has studied Christian dogma will confirm that the historian has proved a historical fact. For even now such beliefs as the following are found among the .followers of the Messiah

Isa became separated from the essence of God and he is therefore not created, but (۱ ;is called the Son of God

;The Messiah was a man, but a man in whom God was incarnate (۲

.The Messiah is himself God who showed himself in the form of man (۳

But we all know that God is not material as a result of which he could exist in space, or separate from himself parts and call himself the Son of God. And we also understand with our wisdom that God has no dimensions as a result of which he could be .contained in something or incarnate himself or come forth in the likeness of man

Moreover, how can it be possible that a God without any need should become in need ?of food and clothing

Therefore, if the Christians ponder carefully, they will confess that the Messiah, like all .other prophets, is the slave of Allah and has absolutely no claim to divinity

:The Qur'an says

They are unbelievers who say, "Allah is the Messiah, Maryam's son." Say, "Who then" shall overrule Allah in any way if He desires to destroy the Messiah, Maryam's son, and his mother, and all those who are on the earth? For to Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between

p: ۱۲۷

(them, creating what He will. Allah is Powerful over everything." (۵:۱۷

Sayings of the Messiah

The Prophet of Islam, the great Messenger (S) said: The disciples asked Hazrat Isa (a.s.), "With whom should we associate?" He replied, "With those whose countenance recalls Allah, and whose speech adds to your knowledge, and whose actions make (your eagerness for the concerns of the next world greater."(۱

The Prophet (S) also said, "The disciples asked Hazrat Isa (a.s.) for guidance for them and he replied, "Musa, Kalim Allah, said to you, "Do not swear in the name of Allah what is a lie, but I say, "Do not swear in the name of Allah, even what is true." The disciples asked for greater guidance, and he said, "The prophet of Allah, Musa, said to you, "Do not commit adultery." But I say to you, "Do not even think of it, because everyone into whose head the thought of adultery enters is like the person who

kindles a fire in a painted room, which even if it doesn't burn the room, at least blackens the paint."'(۲)

Amir al-mu'minin (a.s.), Hazrat 'Ali said, "The Messiah, the son of Maryam said, "Fortunate is he whose silence is thought and whose look gives advice; whose house gives him rest and comfort. He repents of his improper actions, and people obtain tranquility from his hand and tongue.'(۳)

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.) said, "Hazrat Isa (a.s.) said to his companions, "O sons of Adam, "Turn away from this world towards Allah, and do not

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۱- Usul al- Kafi vol. I, p. ۳۹

۲- Bihar al-anwar, vol. ۱۴, p. ۳۳۱.

۳- Bihar al-anwar, vol. ۱۴, p. ۳۲۰.

enslave your heart to it, for you were not created for this world alone. It has no merit for you. You will not stay in it, and it will not remain for you. What a great many people are deceived and ruined! Whoever is attracted by it, and places his confidence in it will be lost. Whoever likes it and goes after it will perish."(۱)

He also said, "The Messiah (a.s.) told his followers, "Refrain from regarding others wives for it plants the bitter seed of passion in the heart of man and that is enough for your perdition. Alas for he whose aim is the pleasure of this world, and whose actions are sins! None of you know how tomorrow and at the time of resurrection he will be ashamed before Allah."(۲)

Questions

۱. What was Imran promised to receive from Allah?

۲. The wife vowed that she would do what with the gift of Allah if he granted it to her?

۳. What name did she give her?

?Under whose supervision was she entrusted in .۴

?Who did one of the kings of Bani Isra'il Martyr .۵

?Who came to her in the form of a man .۶

?What message did he bring with him .۷

?What rumours started going around about the mother of Isa .۸

?What comment did Maryam say to herself after the birth .۹

?What did the child say to her .۱۰

?Who is the child .۱۱

?What helped Maryam to be courageous again to return to where she was living .۱۲

What remarks did people .۱۳

p: ۱۲۹

.Bihar al-anwar vol. ۱۴, p. ۲۸۹ -۱

.Bihar al-anwar. vol. ۱۴, p. ۳۲۳ -۲

?make to her when she returned to the place where she lived

?What did the child say to the people in return .۱۴

?In whose hand was Palestine in during the time of Prophet Isa .۱۵

?What were the people like .۱۶

?What happened to the followers of Hazrat Isa day by day .۱۷

?What happened to the leaders of the Jews day by day .۱۸

?What did the finally decide to do with Hazrat Isa .۱۹

?Who did they crucify, and did they fall for it .۲۰

?What did the "messiah" consider himself as .۲۱

?What happened to the religion after Hazrat Isa .۲۲

?Name two misconceptions, which took place after Hazrat Isa .۲۳

?What does the Qur'an say about the unbelievers .۲۴

?What did Imam Ja'far As-Sadiq say to his companions .۲۵

Lesson ۱۹: Muhammad, the Radiance that shone forth in the Darkness

The World before Islam

The chaotic situation of the world prior to Islam is clearly reflected in the accurate mirror of history. The outline of decline, oppression, bloodshed, idol-worship is .evident in this mirror

Before Islam, it was as if mankind was leaning over the edge of the precipice of ruin and destruction, and there was the fear that at any moment it could roll down and be .annihilated in it

The Religions and Beliefs of the People

a) In the Arabian Peninsula

The Arabs prior to Islam were committed in their hearts to idols, and what they saw around themselves with their own eyes they made into idols. Not only did they lower their heads and prostrate before them, but they donated everything had, even gifts of .(agricultural produce, to their idols(۱

They believed that apart from the life of this world there was no

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.see VI: ۱۳۷ -۱

other life(۱). Obviously those who did not see the wretchedness of their idols whom .they had chosen as their gods could not grasp the idea and truth of the resurrection

So it was no wonder that they fumed the House, which Hazrat Ibrahim had built at the .command of and in the name of Allah into brightly coloured quarters for their idols

As for the origins of idol-worship in the Hijaz, some believe that the first person to introduce it was 'Amr ibn Luhayy. Alwrites in his history: "He (ibn Luhayy) journeyed to Syria and saw all of the inhabitants worshipping idols. When he asked about the virtues of the idols, they told him, 'They have befriended us, and they bring down rain for us.' He took a liking to them and asked them to give him an idol. They gave him teal and he took him to Mecca." Ibn Hisham writes that 'Amr ibn Luhayy brought this idol from Mu'ab (Iraq). In any case, Hubab was the most famous of the gods in the Ka'bah: he was built in the form of man, and holy arrows, which the diviners used for casting .auguries, were set in front of him

The influence of idol-worship grew to the point where idols were built in the form of .animals, plants, men, jinn angels and stars; even stones were the objects of worship

Lat' was in Ta'il in the form of a cubic stone, and had a special field and meadow near ' Taif which was a holy

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.see XLV: ۲۴ -۱

place, and cutting trees, hunting and the spilling of blood were not lawful in its vicinity; .the people of Mecca and other places made pilgrimage to it

Uzza was a very powerful god equivalent to the planet Venus and was situated in Nakhlah east of Mecca, and was worshipped there It was given much more honour than the other idols. The sanctuary of Uzza took the form of three trees and human .sacrifices were offered to it

Manat was the god of predestination, and its original place of worship was a black

stone at Qudayd (on the road between Mecca and Medina). It belonged especially to the tribes of Aws and Khazraj(1).

These gods were female and were like angels.

Ba'l was the embodiment of the spirit of wells and underground waters.

Sometimes a well with clean, invigorating water became wore- in the dry desert.

A cave, when it had connections with the gods and the underground powers, was also sanctified. The temple of Ghabghab in Nakhlah (see above) was in such a place.

Dhat Anwat, from which things were hung, was in Nakhlah and in some years the Meccan made pilgrimage there.

Dhu sh-Shard was respected in the form of a heap of black shining cubic stones.

The spirit of arable lands was the god of good works and sacrifices had to be made to it. The spirit of barren land was a wicked devil who had to be avoided.

They had idols made of wood or metal or stones with no definite form round which they made several

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١- See lesson ٢٠

turns whenever they went into their houses, and from which they took permission when they went out on a journey and then took with themselves.

The town of Harran where Ibrahim had started his campaign against star-worship, was the centre of the Sabaeans. In this town, stars were the object of veneration. Belief in the stars and in the connection between the movements of the stars and earthly destiny was very strong. Each star was the god of one event. Images of Mars, Jupiter, Venus, etc. were erected in the temples, and they asked for help from them, and sometimes sacrificed them.

The thoughts of the Sabeans sometimes fumed to angels and jinn. The angels were the daughters of god, and were thought to influence events. They imagined that god had a wife who was one of the jinn(۱).

b) In Iran

In Iran also many religions were being practised, but the one which most people followed was Zoroastrians, the official religion.

If we accept that Zoroaster was a true prophet who had a religion based on tawhid, we must also acknowledge that his true teachings had been changed by the passage of time. Gradually, they changed their direction and even their form and identity to the benefit of the ruling classes.

A veil behind which the Magi and the priests to the advantage of themselves and the ruling classes transformed the foundations and principles covered its very general and pleasant maxims. Thus it was that tawhid became polytheism, and the pure sweet and excellent teachings did not

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۱- Taken from "Jihan dar 'Asr Bihat Muhammad Rafsanjani Tehran ۱۳۳۵.

stay: the shell remained, but the nut was thrown out, and the empty shells were filled with the ancient gods of the first times of the Aryan tribes.

c) In Europe

The religious situation in Europe was like it was in Iran. Christianity had given up its original form, and had become stuck in polytheism and the dogma of the Trinity.

In France, Britain and Spain, people did not believe in a Unique God.

d) In India

There were various religions, but idolatry prevailed

Class and Racial Differences

In Iran people were divided into classes, and each class had special restrictions and privileges. The class connected with the ruling council had the most privileges. Similarly in Europe and India, society was divided into classes and the right to possess .land, to trade, and the exemption from taxes was the prerogative of the nobility

At that time also, every one of the people of the world thought themselves superior in .terms of race over everyone else

The Situation of Women in Pre–Islamic Society

In Arabia, woman was a commodity, counted in the wealth of the father, husband or son; and after death she was inherited like the other possessions and became the property of the descendants

It was a disgrace to have a daughter, and in some tribes the family buried this shameful thing with their own hands(۱) . In Iran, also, the form of class society did not .bring anything better for women

In Greece, woman was a creature of perpetual filthiness, a child of Satan, similar to an animal. In India, throughout her life, she was under the control of her father, husband or

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۱- ۵۹ :See XVI.

son, and had to address her husband as god, master and lord, and, like a slave, she had no right to ownership - after the death of her husband she had no right to take another husband. The revolting custom of Sati the burning of the widow alive with the .funeral pyre of her husband was also practised at that time

In Japan, as well, woman was under the control of her father husband or son for the whole of her life, and the daughter had no share in inheritance

In China the father was master of the house and had so much power that he could sell his wife and children into bondage and slavery, and sometimes he even had the right to kill them. On top of this, daughters had no esteem and sometimes they were left in .the desert to be the prey of the wild pigs

The Romans also considered women to be the incarnation of evil and as harmful .spirits, and kept them like children under their control

So every human society at that time, wherever it was, was sunken in darkness, decline and oppression. Throughout the whole of the world, no glow or gleam of light met the eye, and although the desire for goodness and virtue still flickered in the depths of the heart of human nature covered by a dark opaqueness, it had been almost extinguished on the one hand in the blackness and gloom of humiliations, passions and oppression, and on the other hand in

the prominent features of poverty and wretchedness. It could not illuminate the path for the seekers after light, purity and felicity. A darkness like a thick heavy cloud in the sky had submerged the daily life of all societies of the time in a deep sleep; and a horrible, powerful obscurity reigned which only the rising of a radiant sun could .disperse

This darkness was more overpowering in Arabia than in any other place, as if they .had been invaded to the depths of degradation and debasement

:Hear what that best of men 'Ali (a.s.) says about those days

You people of Arabia followed the worst religion; you dwelt amongst rough stones...' and poisonous serpents. You drank putrid water and ate filthy food. You shed the blood of one another and paid no heed to relationships. Idols are established among (you, and sins cling to you."(۱

(The Birth of Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam (S

Muhammad (S) opened his eyes to the world on the ١٧th of Rabi' al-awwal of the ۵٣rd year before the Hijrah (۵٧٠ AD).

His father, Abdullah was from the family of Hazrat Isma'il, and had died before he could see his son. His mother was one of the most pious women of that time.

Muhammad (S) was entrusted to a virtuous woman called Halimah, who suckled him and nursed him.

One day, Muhammad (S) who had not yet reached the age of four years, asked Halimah if he could go into the desert with the other boys…Halimah said: "I bathed Muhammad and anoint his hair with oil. I put collyrium on

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١- Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon ٢۶

his eyes and hung a Yemenite stone on a string and put it round his neck so that no harm could come to him from the spirits of the desert. But Muhammad tore the stone from his neck and said, 'Don't worry about me. My God is taking care of me!'

So we see that from childhood he was the object of God's favour and grace, and was always guided by Divine friendship and help in works that were in their right time and place.

Muhammad's behaviour and speech m childhood were such that everyone's attention was attracted. In his youth, also, he was far from that which tainted those people in its environment He took no part in their riotous poetry gatherings. He drank no wine, was an enemy of the idols was perfect in speech and act. Years before he became a prophet, the people called him 'al-Amin' (the trustworthy one). He had a pure mind and radiant intellect, and a godly and heavenly character. Every year for one month he went to the cave of Hirah and was with God in His mysteries and in prayer. At the end of the month, before returning to his home, he went to the Ka'bah and made seven or more circumambulatings.

At the age of forty, while busy in worship in the cave of Hirah he was elevated to the .station of Messengership

For three years the Prophet of Islam (S) received no command to call people openly to Islam. And during that time

only a few people had faith in Muhammad (S). Among men, the first person who loved and followed him was Hazrat 'Ali (a.s.), and among women, Khadijah(۱) .

Then after three years he received the command to invite people openly to Islam, and he called his close family to be his guests; about forty of these people assemble I together. The food, which the Prophet (S) had prepared, was no more than enough to satisfy the appetite of one man, but by the power of God that little food filled everyone, and this was the cause of much amazement. Abu Lahab without thinking "!what he was saying, cried out: "Muhammad is a magician

That day the relatives dispersed before the Prophet could speak, so he called them again the next day. After they had partaken of the food and hospitality, he spoke: "O Sons of 'Abdul-Muttalib! No youth has brought to his people better than what I bring to you. I have brought you the best of this world and of the world of the resurrection. I have been commanded by Allah to call you to Him. Which of you will extend his help to me and become my brother and successor?" Apart from 'Ali (a.s.), no one answered. The Prophet placed his hand on 'Ali's shoulder and said: "This is my brother and my executor among you. Listen what he says and obey him!"(۲).

One day the Prophet (S) went up on to Mount Safa and called the people around him. He

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۱- Tarikh at-Tabni vol. ۳, p ۱۱۵۹; Sinan ibn Hisham vol. ۱, p. ۲۴۰-۲۴۵.

۲- Tarikh at-Tabari vol. ۳, p. ۱۷۱-۱۱۷۳.

said: “If I told you that an enemy was going to fall on you this morning or this evening, would you trust me?” All together they replied: “Yes!” He said: “I warn you of a severe torment that is soon to fall on you.” Out of fear that the speech of Muhammad (S) would take effect in the hearts of those present, Abu Lahab broke the silence and said ”?to him: “Did we assemble here just to listen to this nonsense

The Prophet of Islam (S) started his call with the slogan of tawhid and the worship of one God, and established tawhid as the basis of all other beliefs. He made known to men Allah, who is nearer to man than man himself; he abolished all forms of idol-.worship, revolutionized the atmosphere of Mecca, and drew people to his religion

Meanwhile, the Quraysh (the most powerful tribe in Mecca, to which Muhammad (S) belonged) were be ill at ease with the progress he was making and tried hard to stop his preaching, even once trying to kill him; but with the help and protection of Allah and with His care and intercession all their tortures, persecutions and schemes were without effect and came to nothing. Day by day the call to Islam, and also the acceptance by people, spread, even to those who came from outside Mecca. People .rose up with their souls in answer to this Divine invitation

In the eleventh year of the prophethood some people from Medina belonging

to the Khazraj tribe came to Mecca to perform the ceremonies of Hajj. The Prophet invited them to Islam and they accepted, with this promise that when they went back to Medina they would call the people to Muhammad's religion. They went to Medina and spread around the invitation of the Prophet (S) “fine next year twelve people from Madina accepted the faith of the Prophet of Islam (S) at Aqaba and resolved: not to associate any with Allah, not to steal, not to fornicate, not to indulge in infanticide, not to bring malicious accusations anyone, not to disobey the Prophet in anything which he indicated. Then the Prophet sent a man by the name of Mus'ab along with them to .teach the Qur’an and thus a large group in Medina pledged their faith in the Prophet

(The Prophet's Migration (Hijrah

Till the thirteenth year of his mission, the Prophet (S) called the people in Mecca to Islam, and stood firm when faced with the persecutions of the Quraysh Eventually he got to know that the Quraysh had hatched an incredible plot to kill him, so he put Hazrat 'Ali (a.s.) to sleep in his bed in his place and left Mecca at night; he hid in a cave, .and then migrated from there to Medina

The Hijrah of the Prophet opened an entirely new chapter in the history of Islam from which a stimulating and surprising leap forward was made. For this very reason, the Hijrah of Muhammad (S) became the beginning of the dating

.system of the Muslims

With the presence of the Prophet of Islam (S) in Medina the tribes of Aws and Khazraj became brothers for life in the shadow of the teachings of Islam, and a blessed .sincerity and cordiality was established between them

The example of Muhammad's behaviour, his spiritual and moral superiority, and the naturalness of his pure religion, caused the people to come to Islam by the score, and .in the end to accept it

The Prophet of Islam (S) was from the people and with the people, and did not maintain a distance from them. He shared with them in their gains and losses. He firmly criticised oppression and aggression, and refrained from and prevented them. He set forth all the principles, which were, in the light of Islam, effective for the development of the position of women, and put an end to the tyranny they had been subjected to previous to Islam. But he also vehemently fought against their unchastely and licentiousness for he wanted them to attain their real development on .the basis of the true principles of Islam

He defended the rights of slaves, and had inroad comprehensive programs for their freedom. The Prophet of Islam created a society where black and white, rich and poor, great and small were all-equal and could enjoy the benefits of being human

beings. In such an atmosphere, there could be no question of 'racial discrimination', for there was a much higher basis in virtue knowledge, piety, human values and .ethical greatness

Let

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:(us look at a clear example of the great teachings of the Prophet (S

Juwaybar was a young man, poor and rather ugly. He came to Medina with a great enthusiasm for Islam, and accepted it. The Prophet gave him a place in the mosque, and later in 'Saqifah', a garden that was under the control of the Prophet, and made .him its overseer

One day the Prophet told him: "It is good for a man to take to himself a woman, and to ".choose a wife, so that he may keep his chastity and have a home-life

May God bless you, but I am poor and ugly; in what woman could there be such a" desire that she would take me as her husband? Especially as I am not from a noble ".family

Juwaybar, with me coming of Islam all the nobility of the age of ignorance (before" Islam) has been broken down together with all the standards of greatness and have been melted together. Black and white, Arab and non-Arab have all come from Adam, and God made Adam from the earth. "For this reason today there is no black and :white, nor even any results from imperfection or excess in something

.The dearest person to God is the virtuous person"

".Now go to the house of Ziyad and ask for his daughter, Dhalfa on my behalf"

Juwaybar did what the Prophet had told him, but Ziyad who was one of the nobles of the Ansar tribe, did not accept, and said, "We only give

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our daughters to people like ourselves - and the Prophet himself knows that very ".well; so go back till I have consulted with him and give him my apologies myself

He fumed to go back, but because of his anger he cried out, "I swear by Cod, neither the Qur'an nor the Prophet have said that one must give one's daughter to someone "!who is of equal status in family and in wealth

Dhulfa heard the voice of Juwaybar and sent someone to her father. He came to her and she asked him, "What have you said to that young man that has made him "?angry

".The Prophet sent him to me to take you, my daughter, with my agreement"

Juwaybar would not tell a lie; send him back and go yourself to the Prophet so that he may clarify the matter for you." Ziyad did what his daughter had said. He sent Juwaybar back and himself hurried to the Prophet and said, Juwaybar brought a message from you. I want to remind you that I am an Ansar and that we do not give ".our daughters in marriage except to men of equal status from the same tribe

Juwaybar is a believer and a man of faith and a man with faith is the equal of a ".woman with faith. Give him your daughter as a wife

Ziyad then resumed home and told his daughter what the Prophet had commanded. The daughter said, "Father! To disobey the Prophet's command is against the religion. And I

"!am ready of my own accord, so accept Juwaybar as your son- in-law

Ziyad brought Juwaybar in front of the people of his tribe and gave him in marriage to his daughter on the basis of the command of Islam. He even gave the dowry to his daughter from his own pocket, and gave them a house with all necessities that they .would live happily

Truly, this light was dazzling; this source or warmth-giving radiance lit up a flame in

every heart that was a guide to all pure hearts on the path. And thus it was that the muddled souls of the people were led forth from the harassment of the gloom and darkness of that time, like moths who wing their way towards the brilliant flame, and fumed in their hundreds towards Islam seeking the protection of the illustrious, .illuminating system of the Qur'an

Questions

?What do we discover from the beauty in certain objects .۱

?What would draw our intention to the designer and the engineer .۲

?Is our understanding of these things by our external senses .۳

Why and on what basis do we believe in the existence of the designer and . ۴ ?engineer

?How do we come up with two categories of objects of our perception .۵

?Which objects fall under the second category .۶

?How do we learn that objects ۱-۶ exist .۷

?When, how, and by whom was infrared radiation discovered .۸

?When, how, and by whom was ultra-violet radiation discovered .۹

?How do we learn about supersonic sounds .۱۰

How do we learn about our .۱۱

?intelligence

?Can our imagination be perceived by the four senses .۱۲

?What can we build in our mind .۱۳

?Can our will and our decisions be perceived by any of the four senses .۱۴

?Can love or hate be perceived by any of the four senses .۱۵

?Can our senses perceive life? How .۱۶

?What do the above scientific examples establish .۱۷

Why should we not reject the existence of things that the four senses do not .۱۸ ?perceive

?In what do we learn about the existence of God .۱۹

?What should we say to those who do not except the existence in things .۲۰

?What is the basic idea written about the sign of God .۲۱

Lesson ۲۰: Muhammad the Foretold Prophet

Time of Expectation and Hope

The prophets of ancient times - especially Hazrat Musa and Hazrat Isa (a.s.), had given their followers news of the advent of Islam, even to the extent that indications of the special attributes of the Prophet of Islam appeared in their Holy Scriptures. For this reason, the Jews and the Christians and the followers of other religions were watching out for the advent of Islam. They would watch like people who see their ship with torn sails and broken anchor in danger of sinking in the sea and therefore direct .(their gaze at the shore of future safety.(۱

Some of the Jews had even found, through much searching, a place between the hills of 'Ayr and Uhud which were named in their own books as the center of Islamic rule, (and migrated there, waiting for the advent of Islam.(۲

The Qur'an is

۱- See Ibn Hisham's Life of Muhammad translated by A. Guillaume (London, ۱ ۹۵۵) pp. ۹۰-۹۵

۲- See Rawdah Kafi p. ۳۰۸.

a testimony to the truth of these facts, that the Torah and the Injil (۱) had given news of the advent of the prophet of Islam.

There are those who follow the Messengers, the illiterate Prophet (not conventionally educated), whose description they find written in the Torah and the Gospel. [He (the Messengers) enjoins them to do good and forbids them to do all that is unlawful, makes lawful for them all that is pure and unlawful all that is filthy, removes their burdens and the entanglements in which they are involved]. Those who believe in him, honor and help him, and follow the light, which is sent down to him, will have everlasting happiness. (۷:۱۵۷)

Muhammad is the Messenger of God and those with him are stern to the disbelievers yet kind among themselves. You can see them bowing and prostrating before God, seeking His favors and pleasure. Their faces (foreheads) are marked due to the effect of their frequent prostrations. That is their description in the Torah and in the Gospel they are mentioned as the seed which shoots out its stalk then becomes stronger, harder and stands firm on its stumps, attracting the farmers. Thus, God has described the believers to enrage the disbelievers. God has promised forgiveness and a great reward to the righteously striving believers (۴۸:۲۹).

This example indicates that the Prophet and his devoted companions started from nothing, and reached to the summit by self-sacrifice, dedication and faith. They surprised the world. God has promised forgiveness and a

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۱- See also lessons ۱۷ ۱۸

great reward to those Jews and Christians who become believers and Muslims and cultivate righteousness.

And when Isa son of Maryam said: 'Children of Isra'il I am indeed the Messenger of Allah to you, confirming the Torah that is before me, and giving good tidings of a Messenger who shall come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad And when he (brought them clear signs, they said: 'This is a manifest sorcery. (۶۱:۶

Those unto whom We have given the Book, and they recognise it as they recognize their sons, even though there is a party of them who conceal the truth and that (wittingly. (۲:۱۴۶

Those to whom We have given the Book recognise him (Muhammad) as they recognize their own sons. Those who have lost their own souls they do not believe. ((۶:۲۰

It comes out clearly from these verses (ayahs) that the previous prophets informed the people of the coming of Muhammad (S) and of his characteristics. Clear glad tidings exist in their religious books, so that when Muhammad (S) appeared together .with Islam, no room remained for any kind of doubt

If there had been no such news in the Christian and Jewish Holy Scriptures at the time of Muhammad (S) it would not have been expected from the radiant thought of someone like Muhammad (S) to stand up and proclaim. In order to prove his messengership before all the people of the Book proclaim and say, "My name and my characteristics have appeared in the Torah and the Injil which

are in your possession at this very moment." Because the enemies of Muhammad (S) did not give up, and to annihilate his message, they collected together the copies of .the Torah and Injil to prove that such characteristics were not in these books

History is a witness that they tried every way that there was in their opposition to Prophet Muhammad (S) and even rose up to fight him. But they never managed with this facile and simple ruse to prove that these characteristics were not mentioned in their holy Scriptures. It is clear that abundant information concerning the Prophet of

.Islam existed in the sacred books

Some More Historical Evidence

Before the rise of Islam, two circles or groups of people had grown up in Medina The first were Jews who had left their original lands in the hope to witness the advent of .(the Prophet of Islam (S

The second were the tribes of Aws and Kharaj, who were the descendants of Tubba‘ the king of Yemen. Tubba‘ came to Medina and learnt that that place would be the place of migration of the Prophet and the place where Islamic Government would take shape. He said to these two tribes to remain in that place until such time as the (Prophet of Islam appeared and then to support him. (۱

They stayed there and Gradually increased in numbers and became powerful to the point that they seized the houses and property of the unconcerned Jews. They 'committed aggression and gradually forgot the cause of their ancestors

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Bihar al-Anwar vol. ۱۵ -۱

staying in that town and became ignorant of why their ancestors had come there and .made their settlement there

However, the Jews, who were unequal with them in power, continued to tell each other of the advent of the Prophet of Islam (S) and of safety from the aggression. The :Qur’an says about the Jews

And from before they, had been praying for victory over the unbelievers, (but) when (there came to them that they recognised, they disbelieved in it. (۲:۸۹

Ibn Hawash (or Ibn'l-llayyaban), a Jewish scholar, left Syria seeking to meet the Prophet of Islam (S) and came to Medina, but while he was alive, Muhammad (S) was not yet called to his prophethood. For this reason, when he was dying, Ibn Hawash

said to the Jews: "I left my extensive, comfortable life in Syria out of love to see Prophet Muhammad (S) came here, and bread and date were enough for me. Alas! I did not achieve my wish. But know that he will rise up in Mecca and will migrate here. In eating he will be content with morsels of bread and dates; he will be so humble that he will ride on unsaddled mount. His rule will spread to an amazing extent. He will be afraid of none, and those who are an obstacle to the way of right and truth will be cast aside..."(۱)

Zayd ibn Umar of Hijaz came in search of the true religion of Ibrahim. On his way he had crossed from Mecca to Syria

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۱- See Ibn Hisham pp. ۹۴-۹۵.

and to Mawsul but the more he searched, the less he found. In the end a Christian scholar said to him that there remained no trace of the original religion of Ibrahim, but that in those very days a prophet was to blossom forth in his own homeland from whose message and sayings he could obtain that original religion.

Zayd returned towards Mecca, but on the way he was killed. The Prophet instructed to goodness through his example, saying: "Zayd was someone who left this world in seeking the way to Allah."(۱)

Buhayra, a Christian scholar, saw Prophet Muhammad (S) in the latter's childhood. He recognised him from the signs he had read in the Holy Scriptures. He said to Abu Talib who was accompanying Muhammad (S), "He will be a prophet. Look after him, and take him to his country quickly."(۲)

Another Christian scholar, Nistur also when he saw Muhammad (S) in the latter's youth, gave the news that he would become a prophet in a clear way, "He is the last prophet of time".

On the basis of these predictions of the holy Books, numerous of people became

Muslims at the very beginning of the rise and appearance of Islam without any .coercion

The Predisposition of the People of Medina towards Islam

When the Prophet received the order from God to invite people to Islam, and at the time of Hajj which existed in a form before Islam, he addressed the people and presented Islam to them. During this time he held a meeting with some people from the tribe of

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.See Bihar al-Anwar vol. ۱۵ pp. ۲۰۴ -۱

.See Ibn Hisham pp. ۷۹-۸۱ -۲

"?Khazraj whom he asked, "What tribe are you from

.From Khazraj." They replied"

.Are you ready to sit together for a few moments and talk?" The Prophet said"

.Yes, we are." They replied"

.I am calling you to One God." Said the Holy Prophet"

Then the Prophet read for them some verses from the sweet words of God and they were so entrapped by the Qur'an that they said to each other without thinking: "We swear that this is what the Jews were telling us of. Let not the Jews reach it before us." Then they all became Muslims, and when they returned to Medina they commenced the propagation of Islam. The Prophet also sent Mus'ab ibn 'umir after .them to teach them the Qur'an and also to call others to Islam

Mur'ab brought many groups in Medina to Islam; among them the Asid the heads of the Aws tribe, became Muslims and said to their tribe, "Muhammad (S) is the very one whose coming the Jews were always announcing." And their tribe also became Muslims, and in this way Islam spread in Medina and became strong. Groups of

Muslims from Mecca also moved there, and, in the end, the Prophet himself went to .Medina and there he set up the Islamic government

The Attraction of Salman to Islam

Salman was an Iranian from a peasant family; his mother and father were Zoroastrians, fire-worshippers Salman whose name was then Ruzbeh, they loved very much. They taught him the beliefs of their religion, and entirely prevented him .from mixing with others

One day, Salman went

on his father's orders to inspect their fields. On his way he fell upon a church in which a group of God's slaves were engaged in prayer. Ruzbeh started to think deeply, and he stayed with them till dusk approached, meditating. At last he understood that their .way was superior to his fathers' and ancestors' way

.Where is the center of this religion?" He asked"

.It is in Syria." They answered"

His father became anxious because of his late return and sent someone to look for him. When he returned home, his father asked him where he had been. He described what had happened, but his father said, "The religion of your ancestors is much ".better

".With my own thinking," he replied, "I have seen that their way is purer"

His father became even more disturbed and rebuked him. He then locked him up in .the house

Ruzbeh secretly sent someone to the Christians and informed them that when merchants came from Syria and had done their work, and when the time came for their return they should tell him and he would secretly leave his house and

.accompany them to Syria

And thus it was that he went to Syria, and into the presence of one of the great Christian scholars, and begged him to take him as his servant and to instruct him on .the acquisition of knowledge and servitude to God. The scholar accepted him

When the scholar died, Ruzbeh went to some of the other great Christians of the day, in accordance with his

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master's instructions. From the last of these scholars, who lived in the Umuriyah :district of Damascus, he asked guidance to another, but he replied

I have no idea of anyone else, but in the very near future a prophet will arise in the" lands of the Arabs who will migrate from his birthplace to a place covered in date-palms. This land is situated between two lava belts. Some of the signs of his magnanimity and special habits are these. He will accept what is given to him out of respect, but he will not take food and alms given out of compassion and aid. Among the signs is the mark and seal of prophethood on his skin. If you can go there, then " .you should go

After the death of that scholar, Ruzbeh asked the caravan leaders who were setting out for business in Arabia to take him with them to that place. They accepted, but on their way they betrayed him and sold him in slavery to a Jew from the Bani Qurayza who put him to labor in the vicinity of Medina. Ruzbeh recognized the very place he had reached as one of the signs told to him by the old scholar. So he was happy to start work in the date-groves of his master, but he was always looking out for the advent of Prophet Muhammad (S) and searched for him, but, because he was in .difficult circumstances, he could not make many inquiries

At last the day

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of meeting arrived; the Prophet had gone, together with some of his companions, to a .place near Medina and Ruzbeh got to hear of this

He said to himself that this was the best time to look for the signs from this person himself and to compare them with what he had heard from the Christian scholar. So he took some morsels of food, which he had with him and gave them to that honored person and said: "This food is for the special benefit of the needy, and since your ".companions are needy, please accept it from me

The Prophet gave it to his companions. Ruzbeh looked carefully, but he saw that the Prophet did not touch the food, and he could not contain himself with joy, for one of .the signs had been found true in him

With excitement he brought another morsel of food, which he had with him to the Prophet, presented it to him and said: "This is my present to you, please accept it from .me." The Prophet gladly accepted it and ate from it

Ruzbeh was looking at him and was enthralled. He then walked around the Prophet of Islam - the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him and his family - to see the mark on the Prophet's shoulder. The Prophet understood what he wanted and took off the clothes that were on his back so that he sees the mark. Ruzbeh saw it and accepted .Islam

He was renamed Salman and the means to

free him were collected. He became close to the group of the companions around the Prophet and with his insight and deep and wide faith he became in the shortest period (of time, the greatest of the Prophet's disciples.(۱

All seekers after truth, who were suffering from the dryness and burning heat of that time like an unquenchable thirst, were looking for the source of being and the water of life. Since the signs which they had read or heard of in the holy books were present in the Prophet they gave their hearts to the ocean and washed their souls in that

spring of the water of life and wisdom. Group after group gave their hearts to the :pure religion of Islam and became followers of Muhammad (S) The Qur'an says

(People, group after group, turned to Islam. (۱۱۰:۲

But together with these seekers after truth, there were groups of Jews and Christians and other enemies who did not embrace Islam, through bigotry or because their businesses or positions were endangered, although they were aware of the truth of .that great, divine person

They knew where the source of salvation was, but through obstinacy they clung to their illusions and did not desist from their stubbornness, but became caught in .everlasting perdition and failed to reach contentment

And when there came to them that which they recognized, they disbelieved in it; (therefore the curse of Allah is on the unbelievers. (۲:۸۹

:Two examples

(Safiyah, the daughter of Hayy ibn Akhtab said, "When the Prophet (S

.See Sirah of Ibn Hisham vol. I, p. ۲۱۲-۲۱۴: Tabaqat Ibn S'd vol. ۴, p. ۵۴ -۱

migrated to Medina and alighted at Qaba', my father and my uncle, Abu Yassir went to call on him in the half-light of dawn. The sunset came and they returned, and I went to them with childish joy. But they were very tired, and, contrary to their custom, they :paid no attention to me. My uncle said to my father

"?Is he the one"

"!By God, I swear he is"

"?Did you recognize him"

".Yes"

"?Now what do you think of him"

"(By God, I swear that as long as I live I will be his enemy.(۱"

The following is another example of this hardheartedness. One day the Holy Prophet said to Ka'b ibn Assad, "Do you not remember the example of Ibn Hawash (the Jewish "?scholar who went from Syria to Medina - see above)? Has it had no effect on you

Yes I do," replied Ka'b, "and if the censure of the Jews did not torment me when they " say "Ka'b is frightened to be killed", I would believe in you. But now I am in the faith of (the Jews and I am safe from their censure, and I shall stay in that religion till I die."(۲

The Qur'an tells of the injury caused by this hardheartedness which is the origin of the :destruction of life and contentment, and speaks of these people thus

Vile is the thing they have sold themselves for, disbelieving in that which Allah sent down, grudging that Allah should send down of His bounty on whomsoever He will of His

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.See Sirah Ibn Hisham vol. ۲. p. ۵۱۸ -۱
See Ithbat al-Hudat vol. ۱. p. ۳۵۰ -۲

servants, and they were laden with anger upon anger; and for unbelievers awaits a (humbling chastisement. (۲:۹۰

Questions

?Who had given the news of the advent of Islam .۱

?How anxiously were the people waiting for the advent of Islam .۲

?Who were some of the people searching for the place named in their Holy Book .۳

۴. What does verse ۱۵۷ ch. ۷ say?

۵. What does verse ۲۹ ch. ۴۸ say?

۶. Did the Prophet and the Muslims establish Islam with suffer or not?

۷. What does V ۶ ch. ۶۱ say?

۸. What does V ۱۴۶ ch. ۲ say?

۹. What does V ۲۰ ch. ۶ say?

۱۰. What do these verses indicate?

۱۱. What would the enemy do if Prophet Muhammad was not mentioned in the Bible?

۱۲. Which groups of people settled around Madina and why?

۱۳. Which group forgot the reason of the settling and which group did not?

۱۴. What does verse ۸۹ ch. ۲ say?

۱۵. What did Ibn Hawash say to his people when he was about to die?

۱۶. What did the Christian scholar say to Zaid ibn Umar?

۱۷. What did the Holy Prophet say about Zaid Ibn Umar?

۱۸. What did Buhayra say about Abu Talib?

۱۹. With who did the Prophet have a meeting with during Hajj?

۲۰. Can you answer the Questions of the Holy Prophet ۱-۳?

۲۱. Who became Muslim because of the preaching of Mus'Ali?

۲۲. Who was Salman and what was his previous religion?

۲۳. Can you mention the experience of Salman before Islam in one paragraph?

Which signs of Prophet Muhammad were mentioned to Salman .۲۴

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?by the Christian scholar

?When and how Ruzbeh experimented the predictions of the Christian Scholar .۲۵

What is considered in the text is the water of life and what did the people do with .۲۶
?it

?What does verse ۲ ch. ۱۱۰ say .۲۷

?Were all the people in the early Muslim community sinners .۲۸

?What does verse ۸۹ ch. ۲ say .۲۹

?Can you mention the experience of Safiyah .۳۰

?What question did the Prophet from Ka'li Ibn Assad and what was the reply .۳۱

?What does verse ۹۰ ch. ۲ say .۳۲

Lesson ۲۱: Al–Qur'an, the Miracle of Islam

Prophets and Miracles

Divine Prophets have always been sent with clear signs, so that men might be .convinced that they had come from God

For this reason those who have souls like polished mirrors and like clear transparent springs, glistening and pure so that they can recognise these signs commit themselves and have faith; like the magicians of Pharaoh's time who, when they saw the amazing miracles of Musa (a.s.), how the staff became a poisonous serpent, understood that this was beyond the power of a human being, believed in him and .ignored Pharaoh's intimidation

The disciples of Isa (a.s.) also saw with their own eyes the effects of his breath when

he breathed into the bodies of the dead, and, by the will of God. raised the dead and gave them life. They were attracted to him, and the souls and spirits of the dead were .(.given everlasting life through faith in Isa (a.s

The Prophet of Islam (S), who was the last prophet and the best and

greatest of them, and who brought an everlasting religion, the perfection of all religions, which last the came at the time of his mission, with clear signs from God, so .that he could be clearly a proof of the legitimacy of His true and perfect religion

The Qur’an, the Everlasting Miracle

Thus it was that the Qur’an the everlasting document of Islam, appeared on the horizon of human thoughts and ideas. The torch which will always shine at the apex of the great religion of Muhammad (S) at the highest peak of human intellects, as long as the sun rises in the East. It is a brilliant divine sign whose lights, like the rays of the sun, are essential in every era and century and for always, for the continuance of life .and the safeguarding of the happiness of all races and classes of humanity

Within this framework and on this foundation, all that is necessary for man's guidance .has come

It elucidates the foundations of belief and also the relation of man and God and the ways of strengthening that relation in words with the softness of the clear waters of murmuring brooks, and the firmness of the standing mountains, attractive, eloquent and strong. It describes the social responsibilities of man; it teaches the ways and the .rules of social behaviour

It puts an end to class differences-and unequal divisions. It wishes the highest in man .and his brotherhood and equality and his elevation

Unequalled Eloquence

Being conversant with vocabulary and having a good knowledge of words at one's

fingertips is

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not such a great difficulty, but their combination and arrangement and harmonisation in a style which has regard for eloquence and fluency, and the construction of phrases with a variety of expression yet in the same way in which they arise in the mind, is the most important skill, and it is something which is not practicable without observing the narrow rules of literary exactness, 'and using craftsmanship and eloquence.

In the art of eloquence, it is said that for eloquence in any speaking or writing it is necessary to observe three principles:

۱) Proficiency in words and their meanings

۲) Power of thought and subtlety of eloquence

۳) Power of expression or skill with the pen

But it must always be kept in mind that although all the rules and requirements of eloquence may be heeded, no one can claim that his speech or writing is always the best, and that no-one can parallel him.

However, Allah the Exalted, Whose range of power and knowledge is without limit, has so variously decorated His words in the Qur'an with arrangements and harmonisation's of words hat no-one, be he the most eloquent man on earth, can bring it's like. And this is the secret of the eternity of the Qur'an the everlasting prophetic document of Hazrat Muhammad (S).

The Qur'an according to the testament of history, shone at that time when the Arabs were at the zenith of their literary development. The famous poets and great orators, Imra'ul-Qais Labid etc., who are still counted as outstanding geniuses in

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the field of literature, wrote poems and gave orisons which sometimes reached the

limits of greatness and which were written on curtains and golden plaques and .attached to the wall of the Ka'abah

But, with the rising of the brilliant sun of the Qur’an all of these lost their light and were eclipsed like the stars. The eloquent Arabs were left bewildered by the eloquence of the Qur’an which was such that the enemies who were full of hate for Islam and Muhammad (S) who even took to the sword to wipe him and his religion out, were unable, with all their efforts, to find even one short mistake in the language and .expression of the Qur’an

The Enemies' Judgement

It was the time of Hajj People were coming to Mecca from everywhere, and the Quraysh were uncomfortable from fear that the news of Muhammads Prophethood might have an effect on the new arrivals. So a group of the Quraysh with Walid at their head, gathered round them and related what unjust things they could about the Prophet and thus dissuaded the new arrivals from meeting him. Then when they were ”.gathered, one of them said, “Let us say this man is soothsayer

They will not believe us,” said Walid “for his speech is not like the sayings of“ ”.soothsayers

.Let us say he is mad,” someone else volunteered“

No one will accept that,” Walid replied, “because his speech and Behaviour are not“ ”.like a lunatic's

.We shall say he is a poet,” they said“

,This also will not work“

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”.because Arabs know all kinds of poetry, and his words are not like a poem

”.We shall say he is a sorcerer“

Sorcerers have special methods, like tying knots and blowing on them, and“ ”.Muhammad does nothing like this

Then Walid himself declared, “I swear by God, the speech of that man has a special sweetness and pleasantness. His speech is like a tree, luxuriant, with steady deep roots and branches, which bend down laden with fruit. Thus we can say to people that his speech is bewitched, because it Causes separation between father and child, wife ”(and sister and brother.(١

To discover the Qur’an eloquence, and also to find out that it is at the summit of eloquence, non-Arab speakers can turn back to the sayings of those Arabs who were experts in the language of those days and which are recorded in history, and also to present day authors who write on this subject, and to the acknowledgements of those .specialists in this branch

Fortunately, from the time of the Prophet (S) till now, all specialists in the art of Arabic eloquence have confessed to the unparalleled eloquence of the Qur’an and have been overwhelmed in the face of it. For example, the famous contemporary Arab writer Abdulfatah Tabari writes: “Arab history tells us of many famous men, knowledgeable in the best poetry and prose, like Ibn-el-Muqaffa', Jahiz ibn 'Amid, Farazdaq Bashshar Abu Nuwas Abu Tammam and so forth, but all of them have shown humility when faced with the Qur’an and

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This saying of Walid refers to the fact that every new Muslim by his acceptance of -١ Islam engages in-a new direction so that he is sometimes forced to wash his bands of .he own people or to oppose their beliefs

have of necessity confessed that the great Qur’an is not of the words of man, but a (Divine Revelation.(١

Dr. Taha Husayn the powerful contemporary Egyptian writer, said: “The Qur’an transcends the limits of prose and poetry; because it has special qualities which

cannot be found in any poem or prose. So the Qur'an cannot be called poetry or prose, rather it should be said: 'It is the Qur'an that is all."(٢)

Harmonisation of its Themes

The speech or writing of a person, however skilful or eloquent he may be, will not be uniform in all conditions and circumstances. In particular, the works which appear in the days of any author's first writings arc very different from the works which come after many years and as the result of much experience and repeated practice; the later works arc almost always better.

But the Qur'an in that it was sent down in the course of ٢٣ years, and in that it was revealed in various circumstances and like a long flowing river passed over various stony places, rapids, narrows, valleys and plains, and witnessed many amazing events, it remained forever, like a spring, clear and fresh. The unity and harmony of the themes and the style and expression of the Qur'an arc a source for wonder. We see this wonder reach its apex, and notice in the contents of the Qur'an that many different subjects are dealt with, but the style and unity of expression remain constant.

It is dear that if someone, when he reached a stage

١- Ruh al-Din al-Islami, Beirut, p. ٣٠-٣٢.

٢- Ibid.

of mastery over a special subject, shows what he can do, he may display brilliance but if he undertakes something in another branch of which he is not a master, he will not produce any distinctive work. But the Qur'an shines to an amazing degree in every area.

Scientific Wonders in the Qur'an

Although the first and basic aim of the Qur'an according to what it says itself, is only to

guide man to the great road of contentment and prosperity in the life of this world, the world of man, and on the way, in pursuing this aim, it expresses many truths from .human knowledge in the natural sciences, in physiology and astronomy

And this is itself another great sign of the wonder of the Qur'an For the Prophet, according to the definite testimony of history, had never studied, grew up in an environment completely devoid of human knowledge and science (except literature .and was far from the centres of science of those days Greece, Rome, Iran

:Now let us see some indications of this wonder

Meteorology is a very new science. The knowledge of former peoples about the .١ phenomena of clouds, wind, rain and snow did not go beyond conjecture and what they could see, and, generally speaking, it had an air of imaginativeness and chance .and was never established on a scientific basis

Captains and farmers both had their signs and indications for forecasting wind and rain, but they did not really understand these phenomena. Thus things went on for thousands of years, till in

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the ١٧th century AD the thermometer, and in the ١٩th century the telegraph, and, gradually, other things necessary for meteorology were invented and discovered. In their turn, scientists settled down to research, till, in 'are first half of the ٢٠th century, the Norwegian scientist, Byerkness succeeded in discovering the general laws of the formation and movements of clouds and the occurrence of storms and rains in all .places

After him, the extent of discoveries in this science, as in other areas, progressed: the rain-bearing properties of clouds, how rain is released from them, the formation and occurrence of hail, matters relating to thunderbolts and thunder and lightning and storms in tropical areas, air currents near the surface of the earth, and other matters, .till knowledge reached extensive limits

But fifteen centuries ago, when the Qur'an told about the winds and the rain and other phenomena, it was right when it told us about the latest, newest discoveries of meteorology. For example, it has now been proved that it is possible for a cloud to reach saturation point but to yield no rain, and for it to be just microscopic particles tiny enough to hang suspended in the air and not to fall and cause rain; however, by means of invisible particles of salt which are blown by the wind from the surface of the sea it will rain.

Or, something more important; the humidity in the air gathers round the crystallised snowflakes which lie at high altitudes and which are scattered by the

wind. Eventually small drops and the first rain unite together, and, as a result of mixing and colliding together in the wind, they gradually become bigger and bigger, and because of their own relatively heavy weight fall from the massed clouds.(۱)

This is what the Qur'an made clear ۱۵ centuries ago:

And We send winds for making fruitful and then we send down water from the sky, thus We give it unto you to drink of it. (۱۵: ۲۲)

۲. Until the invention of the aircraft and the possibility of highflying, man's knowledge and experience did not encompass needles of ice beyond the clouds. Till then no-one knew that mountains of ice-needles existed in the sky above man's heads.(۲)

But the Qur'an is very clear when it says:

He sendeth down from the sky, from mountains therein, hail. (۲۴: ۴۳)

۳. Living things in other worlds.

Man, with the help of his knowledge of space, has set foot on the moon, but the matter of the existence of living things on other worlds has not proceeded beyond theory, and we can say that, from many signs, only is it possible that there are living things such as animals or man on some other planets and stars. But the Qur'an

:declares unambiguously

And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and of what He hath spread out in both of them of animate beings and for their gathering together when (He willeth; He is All- Powerful. (۴۲:۲۹

In Surah ۳۶ (Ya-Sin), we .۴

.Mehdi Barzargan, sad wa Baran afar Qur'an p. ۱۹-۲۵, ۵۹-۶۰ -۱
Ibid, p. ۱۴۰-۱۴۳ -۲

:have

Glory be to He Who created all the pairs of what the earth produces, and of (themselves, and of what they know not. (۳۶: ۳۶

:And in Surah ۲۰ (Ta-Ha), we read

And sent down water out of the sky, and therewith We have brought forth various (pairs of plants. (۲۰:۵۳

In times when man's knowledge did not permit the respected interpreters of the Qur'an to know that plants and growing things came in pairs and couples, they interpreted and observed pairing in classes, species or by form and matter or other philosophical terms which do not exist in the pages of the Qur'an But today. On the basis of new research, it has been discovered that not only are men and animals created in pairs, but other living things also. One of the most amazing phenomena in the world is the pairing and fertilisations of plants, which is all explained in Natural .science books

The Qur'an Makes a Challenge

Not only from the point of view of eloquence, but also, as we have seen, in the fields of human ideas and society, and for all levels of understanding, the Qur'an is a

miracle. For rhetoricians it has its eloquence, for philosophers its wisdom, and for scientists its different kinds knowledge. For all these reasons the Qur'an addresses all ".people and says: "If you say this book is the word of man, bring its like and its equal

Say: 'If man and jinn banded together to produce the like of this Qur'an they would" never produce its like, not

(though they back one another." (۱۷: ۸۸

Or do they say: 'He has forged it'? Say: 'Then briny you ten surahs the like of it," forged; and call upon who you are able, apart from Allah if you speak truly.' Then if they do not answer you, know that it has been sent down with Allah's knowledge, and (that there is no god but He." (۱۱: ۱۳-۱۴

And if you are in doubt about what We have sent down on Our servant, then bring a" (surah like it." (۲: ۲۳

But we see from the testimony of history that from then till now no one has had the courage to do this and produce its like. Of course, during the time of Muhammad (S) and after his death, some Arabs, like Musailemah, Sajah and Ibn Abil-'Awja planned to .challenge it but alley were not able, and eventually confessed to their incapacity

In the time of the Prophet (S) the enemies of Islam, who used the most awful means in their work, torturing the Muslims, laying economic boycotts on them, plotting to kill Muhammad (S) and so forth, had no-one who could do a simple thing like 'bringing one ;surah like the Qur'an

In the present day, too, the scholars who spend millions of dollars trying to destroy Islam would certainly attack it in this inexpensive and easy way (bringing a surah like the Qur'an if they could. If they had been able to do that up to now, it would have been a victory for

them and the end of Islam and the news would have been blown on all the trumpets .of the world's newsmen

In the end it is necessary to remind ourselves that if we get to know the Qur’an or get to know it better and put its great, magnificent and precise project into action, .greatness will be ours, and more

The huge edifice of our, the Muslims, greatness collapsed when we stopped putting the commands of this heavenly book into practice. So we fell down, we were satisfied .only with the name of Islam

Our departed greatness will return when we leave this crooked way and, starting again, become new Muslims and put the Qur’an at the top of the sights of our hearts :and our wisdom, and make it an example for life, as the Prophet said

When calamities encompass you like the darkness of the night, reach for the“ (Qur’an.(۱

Questions

?Why do prophets show miracles .۱

?What kind of people can appreciate miracles .۲

What is an everlasting document, the torch that always shine, peak of human .۳ ?intellects, and brilliant divine sign, and why

?How does eloquence in speech come about .۴

?Can one consider his eloquent speech unparalleled .۵

?How eloquent were the people of the times of Imra’ul Qays .۶

?What kinds of documents were being hung over the walls of the Kaba .۷

?What made these documents lose their value .۸

?Can you mention briefly the planning and proposals of Arabs against the Prophet .۹

?What did Walid say and propose .۱۰

Can you name some of .۱۱

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.Usul al-Kafi, vol. ۲, p. ۵۹۹ -۱

?the great Arab orators and poets from the time of the Holy Prophet until this day

?Are all works of writer uniform throught his life .۱۲

?What is the case with the Holy Qur'an .۱۳

?What is the basic agenda of the Holy Qur'an .۱۴

?Did Prophet Muhammad live in a scientific community .۱۵

?Who discovered general laws of cloud formations .۱۶

What does verse ۲۲ ch. ۵ say and does it agree with today's views of rain and cloud .۱۷ ?formations

?What does verse ۴۳ ch. ۲۴ say about ice .۱۸

?What does verse ۲۹ ch. ۴۲ and verse ۳۶ ch ۳۶ say .۱۹

?What does verse ۵۳ ch. ۲۰ say and what is the meaning of created in pairs .۲۰

What does verse ۸۸ ch. ۱۷ and verse ۱۳-۱۴ ch. ۱۱ and verse ۲۳ ch. ۲ say and is such .۲۱ ?challenge still valid

?What has ignoring and practising the guidance of Qur'an has done to Muslims .۲۲

Lesson ۲۲: The Message of Islam

The Message of Islam

:The spirit of the message of Islam can be summed up and shown in this phrase

.La ilaha illa Allah." - There is no god but Allah"

.It means that, apart from the One and Only Allah, nothing must be worshipped

This is the great, fruitful, abundant secret of the tree of Islam; for if we compare Islam to a tree, and its ideology to the seed or the root, we must realize that the health and fruitfulness of the tree is connected to the health of the seed or the roots. And then we see how strong, how steadfast and steely the

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.basis of the ideology of Islam is, as revealed in this one phrase

Contentment and Faith Go Together

If all man's wishes were rooted in material things alone, and man felt no desire in his soul to transcend the material world, happiness would come from securing material things. But we know and see that man screams out with the voice of his spirit against the depths of technology and materiality. With every increase in material things, the craving of society for the spirit and for spiritual wants increases, and this .phenomenon is clearly evident in the recalcitrance and disorder in society

The proof is the complete disruption and crisis, which has caste its shadow over civilised societies since the beginnings of the twentieth century, to the point where the .spiritual upheaval of society, especially among young, is out of control

The Russian psychologist and sociologist, Sorokin, said: "Because, in the culture of a materialist civilisation man is only an organism with life, and is in no way attributed with the values and absolutes of goodness beauty and wisdom, no way has been ".envisaged to reach spiritual perfection and spiritual wants

Unless the sublime spins of man who, like the keen-winged falcon, desires the exaltation of flying above the mountain ridges and peaks, soars to places far from human hands, and unless it is refreshed at the source of spiritual virtues, it will not be

free of these disruptions and outbursts. All the crimes and desires for gratification are signs of the breaking of natural roaring waves which will

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not be quiet until they reach the safety of the shore. And the shore of safety is only faith in One Limitless Power, Infinite Knowledge, Pure Perfection and keeping away from imaginary gods. By remembering such a power, and having true faith in it, the heart finds contentment. The Qur'an recites this great truth in the shortest of :sentences

(In remembrance of Allah are the hearts at rest (۱۳: ۲۸

Indeed the peace of hearts is only in remembrance of Allah. Only leaning towards and attention to God can regulate human nature and guide it to happiness. Islam weighs :the value of man by this very standard and criterion and says

Surely the noblest among you in the sight of Allah is the most God fearing of you. (۴۹: (۱۳

The aim of Islam is to show, to indicate the better and higher horizons, and to save man from the ash-cloth of his material skin and his lusts, so that man may know the real pastures of green and luxuriant pleasures, and desist from journeying in the furnace of material ways and walk in the true way of contentment.

O ye who believe! Respond to Allah and His messenger when He calls you unto that (which will give you life (۸: ۲۴

By acquiring knowledge of Islam, the dead soul and dominant faculties of man will be made alive, will rise up and grow, and this life will reach the source through the .windows of the laws and the perspective of the aims of Islam

Now let

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us look at some of these perspectives: Islamic fraternity; watchfulness by the people; .the status of knowledge; work and effort; the structure of the family

Islamic Fraternity .۱

Islamic brotherhood is based on the highest human virtue, for it is far from hollow rootless formalities It is a reality for the strengthening of self-sacrifice in the Muslim individual and the keeping alive of the spirit of purity and sincerity and faith. One of its direct practical results is the creation of responsibility and sympathy between individuals in all aspects of life. On the basis of this brotherhood, a Muslim cannot .refrain from sharing his brother's difficulties

The project of initiating Islamic brotherhood in the first days of Islam was so skillfully and interestingly put into action that the poor and the rich were brothers in heart and .soul

:Imam Sadiq (a.s.) explained Islamic brotherhood in this easy and expansive way

The believers are brothers one to the other, and are in the likeness of one man in" ".that if one part is in pain, the other parts will not be at peace

:He also said - may the peace of Allah be upon him

The spirit of Islamic brotherhood does not allow you to be full and your thirst" quenched while your Muslim brother is hungry and thirsty, nor that you should be clothed and your Muslim brother naked. You must wish for him what you wish for yourself. Support him as he supports you; when he is traveling guard his property and honor. When he returns hurry to

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see him, give him respect as if you were his and he were yours. If he is fortunate, give ".thanks to Allah for his gladness. If he is in difficulty, help him

Watchfulness by the People .۲

Cod has created white blood-cells in our bodies to be vigilant like guards against microbes, the enemies of the body's health; to defend against invasion, so that no .disorder occurs in the human constitution

This can be a clear model for Muslims to be awake concerning events in their own society like watchmen and guards, so that whenever spirituality and goodness and rightness fall captive into the clutches of evil and falsity they can root it out, and, if .necessary, give their life for this serious thing

Otherwise, of the society, nothing will be left but a lifeless corpse. For if men remain silent in the face of every injustice and impertinence, and stay quiet like a lagoon, they will create an atmosphere for breeding worms and leeches. Their brightness will soon .become filthy, stinking and polluted

So, like the irregular waves of the roaring seas, society must always be struggling, moving, attacking encroachments and shaking up so that impurities can have no .effect on its existence

To create a living society, Islam has let it be known that the questions of attentiveness and watchfulness by the people is one of the most necessary cubes of the Muslims and always warns them that the duties of society are of equal weight and on an equal footing with individual duty, and that Muslims must

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.also satisfy their religion by this great means

In this area the Qur’an gives two commandments as practical advice: bidding to good .((amr bil-ma'ruf) and forbidding evil (nahy anil-munkar

Imam Baqir (a.s.) said: “Bidding to good and forbidding evil are great responsibilities ”.on which the other necessary foundations repose

The day on which Muslim society forgets these two great laws, they will forfeit their greatness. It must not be forgotten that bidding to good and forbidding evil are a

great duty for every individual Muslim, and that by putting these into action they can .create a healthy, living society

The Status of Knowledge .۳

In the remote past, that is, before Islam, education was not public, and all people did not have the permission or the right to acquire knowledge. Education was the monopoly of a special group, i.e. the ruling class, the aristocracy, the nobility and royal families. This situation was more evident in countries whose system of government .was based on the class system

The Arab peoples especially, and the inhabitants of the Arabian peninsula, were further behind other countries as regards civilisation and culture, so that at the time of the advent of Islam, in the Hejaz itself, those who were literate (i.e. those who .could merely read and write) could be counted on the fingers

In such a time, among such a people, Islam raised the position of esteem of education .to the level of a religious duty from the very first

It is the Qur'an, which in many places honours the searchers after knowledge with its divine

.(and sweet call and gives them an elevated rank(۱

The Prophet (S) said: "The acquisition of knowledge is an obligation on every Muslim; "(Allah loves the reamed.(۲

(Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: "Seeking knowledge is a duty."(۳

Imam Baqir (a.s.) said: "(Just as zakat on wealth is so that you give a part of it in the way of Allah)... Zakat on knowledge is also that you instruct others with your (knowledge."(۴

The history of Islam is a sure witness to the fact that Islam cultivates knowledge. This

constant recommendation to the acquisition of knowledge by Islam was the reason that Muslims, especially in the Middle Ages when Europe was in ignorant dark ness .were always in advance and were the standard-bearers o knowledge and civilization

Of course, it must be remembered that Muslims taught know ledge together with deep faith in God and attention to spiritual values, and did not merely give their attention to profit in this world. Regretfully, in later centuries, when they fumed away from the clear and beneficial commands of Islam knowledge also fell from their sight, and thus they dropped behind in the caravan of the advancement of human .knowledge

Work and Effort .۴

These are two of the inherent principles of nature and creation God has put within them the secret of progress and move meet. The appearance of spring, the season of movement i nature, the flowing of rivers and streams, the bubbling up o springs, nest building and the coming and going of birds, the blowing of the breeze, the caressing of

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see LVIII; ۱۱ -۱
.Usul al-Kafi vol. I, p ۳۰-۴۱ -۲
.Usul al-Kafi vol. I, p. ۳۰-۴۱ -۳
.Usul al-Kafi vol. I, p. ۳۰-۴۱ -۴

the gentle warmth of the morning, the waves of blessings of the rustling wind, the twist and turns of the branches and flowers and leaves in the murmuring beckoning of the breeze, the pushing forth and growth of plants, the migration of birds from one climate to another, all these are attractive allegories and enticing allusions from creation for man, to lift him out of dispiritedness and to raise him am make him move, .to rejoice, work, strive and endeavor to grow and flow and to be in movement

On the basis of this natural law, Islam has called to work and to striving. 'Ali the great :and beloved leader, said

One who has land and water at his disposal, but does not utilize these two great“ ”.resources and becomes poor – may Allah curse him

Imam Sadiq (as.) said: “Allah loves no work as he loves agriculture – this usefully ”.productive work

”.And: “Cultivators are the treasurers of the people

Imam ‘Ali (a.s.) also said: “Attend to various kinds of trade Allah loves a trustworthy ”.and truthful tradesman

”.From Imam Sadiq (a s) again: “ honor and magnanimity come from effort and work

)And Imam Kazim (a.s.) said: “Allah is disgusted with the quiet, lazy man.”(١

Imam Baqir, our fifth great, beloved leader – may the peace of Allah be with him – went once to his field outside the town of Medina when the weather was burning hot, and seat dripped down his sleeves, so that he could work there. A man who

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.All these six sayings are from Wasa'il ash-Shi'a, vol. ١٢. vol. ١٢ -١

believed that work was a disgrace in the eyes of Islam came up to him and said to him in great surprise: “You, who are one of the Quraysh and of the first rank why must you give so much esteem to this world and come to this place in this sweaty weather? If ”?you died in this situation, what would you do

The Imam replied: “If my death comes, I have died in submission and obedience to Allah. For I have come here to gain my family's expenses, so that I do not have to stretch out my hand in need before you or others. Man should fear that time when his ”.death comes and he is occupied in sin and disobedience

”!The man replied: “I wanted to counsel you, but it is I who have been advised

It must be kept in mind that although Islam lends importance to trading and

agriculture and other work and counts them as worship, it does not on the other hand :sanction excess in and overdoing work. Islam says

Devote some hours of the night and day to work, and share out other hours for the“ (other material and spiritual aspects of life.”(۱

Rest, attend to the situation in your family attend to Islamic duties, pray, read the .Qur’an and visit your friends

Marriage and Running a Family .۵

Marriage is another, natural principle. Even plants have a kind of marriage to bear fruits and be fertile. Contrary to the ideas of some, marriage is not entirely an individual and Personal matter, for

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.Nahjul Balaghah, saying no. ۳۹۰ -۱

.it has an entirely social result

The strength and stability of descendants, the survival of society and nations, and also the creation of certain ideals are all connected with it, because the following of some of the aims of man and his society will be entrusted to those descendants who .come after

Thus marriage harmonises human instincts and protects from sin, and perhaps it was these necessities that caused God to make the institution of marriage have such a strong physical attractive for individuals so that if they did not realise its advantages .they would pursue it by the requirements of instinct

But this instinctive desire must be controlled by the guidance and commands of religion, for if not, like a car with a headstrong driver, the result will be a crash into the .depths of the valley of misery and ruin

For this reason Islam lays much stress on marriage and the ease of satisfying its

conditions. The holy Qur'an says that marriage is a divine gift and necessary for peace (and comfort.(١

The Prophet said: "Marriage and having a family are my way and tradition." He also said - may the peace of Allah be always with him- Whenever someone whose conduct and faith meet with your approval, and he comes to you desirous of marriage, be (ready, for if not, disaster and corruption will seize the land."(٢

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: "The Prophet fixed the dowry for his daughters and womenfolk .(at no more than five hundred dirhams."(٣

Although that was a very

.See ٣٠:٢١ -١
.Wasa'il ash-Shi'a, vol. ١۴, p. ٧ and Kafi, vol. ۵, p. ٣۴٧ -٢
.Kafi, vol. ۵, p. ٣٧۶ -٣

small sum in the eyes of the notable families of those days, this is itself a sign that Islam suggests the project of marriage for the control of natural instincts, and makes .it very easy

Moreover, Islam in this area has severely fought against gilted illusion in marriage and class differences and has said that inappropriate and mistaken formalities are futile. Miqdad was a Muslim man with a head full of fervor and a heart overflowing with faith, but he was poor and without a tribe. Daba'ah was the granddaughter of Abdul-Mutalib daughter of an uncle of the Prophet of Islam and from the Quraysh. The Prophet, with their desire and delight and with Discretion, married these two, and this well-girl lit up the poor cottage of Miqdad with the warmth of her love for the rest .of her life

Imam Sadiq - may Allah bless him - explained the philosophy of this marriage: "The Prophet did this to bring marriage out of the framework of class formalities, and so

that others should follow the Prophet, and know that the most honored individuals before Allah are the chastest." (1)

We can see another example in the life of the fourth Imam (a.s.). Abdul Malik Marwan learnt that the Imam had set his female slave free and had married her. In his view it was not fitting for someone of the position of the Imam to marry a freed slave girl, so he sent a letter containing an admonition to this great man. The

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1- Kafi, vol. ۵, p. ۳۴۴

Imam wrote in his answer:

"Your letter has arrived...You suppose that marrying a girl of the Quraysh would be a reason for an increase in my prestige. This is a mistake, because there is no better than the Prophet of Islam from whose family I am. I married my girl slave because she is chaste in the eyes of the religion, and that is no small thing. Allah, by the blessing of Islam, has cleared away imaginary prejudices and privileges; the standard of worth is faith and piety. This admonition, which you have written to me would have been appropriate in the tune of ignorance and it is connected to the time before Islam. Wa's-salam."(1)

Questions

۱. What is the meaning of la il ha illa Allah?

۲. What would happen if man felt no desire in his soul to transcend the material world?

۳. What did the Russian psychologist and sociologist Sorokin say about the culture of a materialist civilisation?

۴. What are crime and desires for gratification signs?

۵. What is the shore of safety?

?What is the peace of hearts .۶

?What is the aim of Islam .۷

?What is the Islamic brotherhood based on .۸

?What did Imam As Sadiq say about brotherhood .۹

What would happen if men were to stay silent in the face of injustice and . ۱۰ ?impertinence

?Why must society always be struggling .۱۱

What were two commandments Qur'an has given to Muslims to create a living .۱۲ ?society

?Why is it important for Muslims not to forget these laws .۱۳

What will happen if Muslims .۱۴

Kafi, vol. ۵, p. ۳۴۴ -۱

?obey these laws

?Was education public before Islam .۱۵

?What was the position of education esteem during Islam .۱۶

?Who said that seeking education is a duty .۱۷

?What is the history of Islam ostore witness to .۱۸

?Muslims teacher knowledge in a deep faith to whom .۱۹

?What are two inherent principles of nature and creation .۲۰

?What did Imam Ali say about what Allah loves in work .۲۱

?What did he also say about trade .۲۲

?What did Imam Kadhim say that Allah is disgusted with .۲۳

?What did the man who disgusted about work say .۲۴

?What did Imam Baqir reply .۲۵

?What did the man reply .۲۶

?Is marriage and entirely Individual and personal matter .۲۷

?What did prophet say about marriage .۲۸

?Who was Miqdad .۲۹

?Why did Abdul Malik Marwan write a letter to Imam Zainul Abideen .۳۰

?What did he think about Imams actions .۳۱

?What was Imams response .۳۲

Lesson ۲۳: The Last Message, The Last Prophet

point

From the first, Islam has said that it is the last message, and Muslims have accepted this fact with wisdom and with love, and have realized that Islam is the last manifestation of revelation, prophet hood and the culmination of the former pure religions. Also, all Muslims, on the basis of ayahs in the Qur'an and hadith believe that the Prophet of Islam (S) is the last Messenger of Allah who was the recipient of human .leadership

The great Qur'an has explained the universality of the pure religion of Islam in many :ayahs and has shown that Muhammad (S) is the last emissary sent by God

Muhammad is not the father of“

p: ۱۸۲

any of one of your men, but the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets Allah (has knowledge of everything.” (۳۳:۴۰

:It has been said in a hadith from the Prophet to Ali

In all respects your relation to me is like that of Harun to Musa (i.e. if Harun was“ Musa's brother, I also take you as a brother according to the rules of brotherhood; if he was Musa's successor, you also will be my successor). Except that Musa was not (the last prophet, and I am the last.”(۱

He also said - may Allah praise him -:“I am the last brick in the building of ”.prophethood. With my coming the prophets have come to an end

:Imam Ali (a.s.) said in Nahj al-Balagha the great book of learning and knowledge

(With the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (S) revelation came to an end.”(۲“

The eighth leader, the true Imam, Hazrat Rida - may the peace of Allah be always :with him, said

The pure religion of Muhammad (S) will not be abrogated till the Day of Resurrection,“ (and also no prophet will follow him.”(۳

What we have just recounted is only a sample of tens of hadith which clearly and succinctly explain the conclusive status of the Prophet (S) and the perpetuity of his .pure religion; they leave no room for doubt

The Universality of Islam

point

.'One of the greatest causes of Islam's ever-lastingness is its 'all-inclusiveness

Islam is a comprehensive project based on the human disposition, and it embraces all ,aspects of life: individual, social, material, spiritual, doctrinal, emotional, economic

p: ۱۸۳

It is an authentic hadith accepted by both the Shia and the Sunnis see Al-Ghadir, - ۱ .vol. ۳ p. ۱۹۶-۲۰۲

.Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon ۱۳۳ -۲

.Bihar al-Anwar, vol. ۱۱, p. ۳۴ -۳

legal and so forth, and it explains the basis of each in the most acceptable way, most .realistically, for all peoples and all levels of people, in every time and place

Thus European Islamicists each with his deep view and research- have all .acknowledged the omni-sideness of Islamic laws and its universality

:Now let us investigate some aspects of this universality

The God of Islam and the Qur'an

The God of Islam is the Preserver of all worldly things. He is not the god of a tribe, for some special group only. At prayer we say: al-hamdu lillahi rabbil-alimin - 'Praise be to (Allah, the Lord of the world.' (۱;۲

Every moment, in every place, whenever He wants, He brings into existence; there is :no limitation on His Essence. He has authority over all existent things

(Blessed be He in Whose hand is the Kingdom - He is powerful over everything." (۶۷:۱'

He is aware of the manifest and the concealed, the past and the future, and .everything, even what is in our hearts

He knoweth whatever is in the heavens and the earth, and He knoweth whatever" you conceal and whatever you declare, and Allah knoweth whatever is in the breasts." ((۶۴: ۴۱۱

Being with Him is possible in every place; there is no need to travel or to pass by a .doorman. He is nearer to us than anything

(We are nearer to him (man) than his jugular vein." (۵۰:۱۶"

He is a reality without parallel, beyond all human attributes and likenesses; He is not like the gods of other altered religions who have become

p: ۱۸۴

.man-like or like something created. Therefore He has no place, for He created place

He is not contained in- time, for He is the phenomenaliser of time. He is not associated, nor has He any beginning or ending. Therefore, He has no like or .similitude

(Like him there is naught; He is the All-hearing, the All-seeing." (۴۲: ۱۱"

.His Essence is beyond sleep, tiredness, remorse and so forth

(Slumber seizes him not, neither sleep." (۲:۲۵۴"

(Say He is Allah One." (۱۱۲: ۱"

He is One without equal; He has no son or mother or Tawhid, neither partner nor associate. This is the reality in Surah Tawhid which Muslims recite many times each day in prayer so as to be far from the possibility of associating something with Him .((shirk

The God of Islam is a God with all the attributes assigned to the pure, sweet tongue of the Qur'an with an understanding wider, more magnificent, greater than can be conceived by created intelligences. Free from want, without partner, prevailing, close, supreme, compassionate, most compassionate, and available to all so that anyone at any time may communicate with Him, bring his needs before Him, ask whatever he wishes of Him, that He may make available what is of benefit and what is expedient, :as He Himself said

(And verily, Allah is to you All-gentle, All-compassionate." (۵۷: ۹

The Equality of All in Islam

Superiority of race or segregation is not only eliminated and void in the eyes of Islam, but the equality of man is an absolute reality from the point of view of Islam, and

it says that all men are equal, all are from one father and one mother and are members of one family, and from the aspect of nobility, origin and connections they are equal partners. No one is better than anyone else, except in purity and .devoutness

O mankind, We have created you male and female, and appointed you races and" tribes that you may know one another. Surely the noblest among you in the sight of (Allah is the most got/fearing of you; Allah is All-knowing, All-aware." (۴۹:۱۳

Islam and Freedom of Thought

Islam is a firm supporter of logic, rational and of thought Imposition of ideas or .beliefs, or the stifling of voices does not exist in Islam

(No compulsion is there in religion. Rectitude has become clear from error.(۲:۲۵۶

In Islam, investigation of the foundations of beliefs is a duty for every individual, and it is an obligation for everyone not to accept anything without proof, and if some commands and precepts are obligatory and must be accepted without why and wherefore. it is because they are from the source of revelation which cannot be in .error, and because they have been stated through the Prophet and the pure Imams

Islam censures those who blindly follow the beliefs of their fathers anti ancestors, and commends self-Investigation and deep examination; it rejects feeble- mindedness .and vain speculation, and urges only to the perusal of knowledge and certainty

And pursue not that thou hast no knowledge of; the hearing, the sight, the heart - all

.of these shall be questioned of

p: ۱۸۶

(۱۷: ۳۶)

Islam grants its opponents the right to set forth their queries in reasonable discussion .and to enumerate their proofs and listen to the answers

(Say: 'Produce your proof, if you speak truly.' (۲: ۱۱۱

This was the reason that many Jews, Christians and those from other groups who took a stand against Islam, came to the Prophet or the pure Imams and sat down and .discussed their religious ideas

Islam and the Invitation to Thought and Education

Islam lends great value to thinking. It asks the learned and wise to think and think again about creation, time, night and day, the sky, the earth, animal life, man and the .universe and what is in it

Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of night and day, and the ship that runs in the sea with profit to men, and the water Allah sends down from the sky therewith reviving the earth after it is dead, and His scattering abroad in it all manner of crawling thing, and the turning about of the winds and the clouds compelled between heaven and earth - surely there are signs for a people (having understanding (۲: ۱۶۴

Also it asks them to research into the lives of those who came before, their thoughts and the causes of their decline and fall, so that they may keep far from the precipices .of their destruction

Divers institutions have passed away before you; journey in the land and behold how ,was the end of those that cried lies. This is an exposition of mankind

p: ۱۸۷

(and a guidance. (۳:۱۳۶-۱۳۷

In short, Islam desires that man should think deeply and freely and travel across the far horizons of thought and knowledge and take everything that is best for the improvement of his being. For this reason Islam values scientific advances and discoveries which are for the help of humanity, and this is why scientists and scholars rose up in the centuries following advent of Islam, to decorate the high road of human civilisation with the jewel of their scientific endeavors so much so that their great names will shine forever at the summit of scientific history. They include Jabir ibn Hayyan Razi Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and Khawajah Nasir ad-Din Tusi who were celebrated in all the sciences of their times: the intellectual sciences, natural science, .astronomy, alchemy, etc

The books of Ibn Sina were even being taught in European universities up to the end of the last century. Jurji Zaydan the famous Christian Lebanese writer, says: on his History of Islamic Civilisation: "As soon as Islamic civilisation found its feet, and the new sciences spread among the Muslims, Muslim scholars appeared whose thinking v as more important than the founders of some of the branches of the sciences. In fact these sciences took on a fresh color with the new researches of Islamic scientists, and .(progresses due to Islamic civilization"(۱

Islam's Life-Concept

From the view of Islam, there is no opposition between the material and the spiritual life, the world and religion. Similarity, those who do not work in this world

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.History of Islamic Civilisation, page ۵۹۸ -۱

or make no effort are not approved of, although those who do not think of anything apart from individual benefit and consumption and profit are also detested from the .point of view of Islam

Imam Sadiq (a.s.), the sixth Imam, said: "He who abandons this world for the next - i.e.

he who withdraws from the activities of life in the name of asceticism - and he who gives up the next world for this world, both are not from among us."(۱).

So it can be said that in this matter Muslims should adjust their actions with equal movement in this world, advancing with its happiness, and in the spiritual world. Therefore in Islam there is no monarchism, being a burden on society, social withdrawal, egoism or seclusion. The Prophet (S) said: "There is no monasticism for us; the monasticism for my followers is jihad in the way of Allah."(۲)

Islamic Commands and the Advance of Time

The transformations, evolutions and development of the means of living and progress in the various elements of civilisation have no kind of incompatibility with the eternity of the commands of Islam, because the incompatibility of a law with this kind of progress is because the law depends on fundamental means and special factors. For example, if one makes a law: Only the hand must be used when writing; only a donkey must be used for travel, etc. This kind of law cannot come into action when science and civilisation advance.

But if it is not in contradiction with fundamental means, and at the

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۱- Wasa'il ash-Shia vol. ۱۲, p. ۴۹.
۲- Bihar al- Anwar, vol. ۷۰, p. ۱۱۴.

time of making the law these were only used as examples, they will not clash with the occurrence of new means and the advance of civilisation Islamic laws are of this latter category, that is to say they do not look especially at the means of one period in history.

For example, they say: One must be unconquerable with regard to foreign powers so as to defend one's vital and human rights. This law, although it was declared in the time of the sword, never depends on the instruments of that time, i.e. Islam never says: The Islamic Jihad must only" be with swords. Thus it is practicable today.

.Similarly with business transactions, trade, work, etc

So, however much civilisation and its means and elements expand, it will never leave the domain of inclusion in the laws of Islam, and this is one of the secrets of the eternity of Islam.

?Does Islam Dispense with Contemporary Ideologies and Systems of Thought

There is no doubt that man has progressed far in the way of knowledge, but scientists themselves confess that what they know in the world of creation is not comparable with what they do not know. And basically, since their vision is limited, they cannot find out all the secrets of the world.

Moreover, each leap forward that man makes is not immune from error. Therefore, m the area of human aspirations, not everything that comes forward, in every field, can be one hundred per cent imbued with certainty, because it is possible that environmental factors and other unforeseen things have an

p: ۱۹۰

effect on man's thinking and outlook and take him far from reality.

But the fundamental project of Islam, since it grows from the root of revelation, has nothing to do with the possibility of mistake, and can give trustworthy guidance at all times.

Of course, with the condition that these pure laws are not inserted within the framework of other deviated systems, whereupon they become completely incapable of deriving advantage.

The Continuation of Divine Assistance

Some imagine that the meaning of the conclusive nature of the Prophet's mission is that after him connection with the hidden, divine world has been interrupted and stopped. This is not valid because the meaning of its conclusiveness is only that after the Prophet of Islam (S) no other prophet or religion will come, not that in a general

.way connections with the unseen world are also severed

For with the undemanding of us Shia Muslims, whereby we believe in the Imamate and Walayat of the twelve pure Imams this connection is everlasting and is continued by means of these pure ones. And this is one of the distinctive points of the Shia school. Mulla Sadra has written in Mafatih al-Ghayb - Keys of the Unseen -: "Revelation, that is to say the descent of the angel to the delegated and prophetic eyes, has been forever cut off, but the door of inspiration and illumination has not and ".will never be closed, and it is not possible for it to be interrupted

?How can Islam be Practised in the present Day and Age

Although corruption in our world is greater today, and although as time rolls

p: ۱۹۱

on it becomes greater, and in the end more destructive and more annihilating, we must remember that generosity and magnanimity are found within increase in difficulty. So our independence and individuality demand that we struggle with the .aberrations of the times

Basically, control and reform of the environment can be considered as one of the most pressing duties. The prophets have also taught us by their lives the lesson of the struggle against the aberrations of the times. They never followed the perverse desires of the pulsation of their own societies or the various passions of the .environment; eventually they made the environment their own environment

The Prophet of Islam - may the peace of Allah be always with him - struggled constantly against the aberrant and amoral customs of the ignorance of his time, till .he built another society and environment

Class differences, the inferiority of women. idol-worship, tribal wars, and tens of other kinds of amorality were among the conventions and customs and beliefs of the people .of those days, but the courage of the prophet saw that all of them were destroyed

Some of the chiefs of the Quraysh from the Utbah group, were very unhappy about the Prophet's method, so they arranged a meeting and after they conferred together with him to make him deviate from his way by promise and threat, but the Prophet replied to them: "This is what I was delegated to do. I swear by Allah that even if the sun were put in one of

my hands and the moon in the other I would not deviate from my way, nor give up my faith, till victory or death ensue."

So let us follow the way of the iron-willed leader and envoy of Allah.

Questions

۱. Who is the last emissary sent by God?

۲. Who was the last brick of the building of Prophethood?

۳. Which Imam said that no prophet would come after Prophet Muhammad?

۴. What is the meaning of al-hamdu lillahi rabbil-alimin?

۵. Who has power over everything?

۶. Who has no partner or associate?

۷. Are all men equal?

۸. Is anyone better than anyone else?

۹. What is Islam a supporter of?

۱۰. What does Islam grant its opponents?

۱۱. Who does Islam lend great value to?

۱۲. What does Islam desire man to think?

?Why does Islam value scientific advances and discoveries .۱۳

?What did the Prophet say was the monasticism for his followers .۱۴

Do the transformation, evaluations, and developments of the means of living and ۱۵ progress in the various elements of civilization have any kind of incompatibility with ?Islam

?Has man progressed far in the way of knowledge .۱۶

?Can scientists find all the secrets of the world .۱۷

?What has Mulla Sadra said about revelation in Mafatih al-Ghayb .۱۸

?What does our independence and individuality demand .۱۹

?What did the Prophet struggle against .۲۰

(Lesson ۲۴: The Imamat, Succession to the Prophet (S

point

Eventually the inevitable occurred and the spirit of the Prophet (S) flew to its eternal abode. For in the words of the poet Nizami 'he who has not died and will not die is only '.God

It was clear that with the

p: ۱۹۳

death of this great man a storm would blow up over the peaceful ocean of Islam, and that turbulent waters would be churned up. The ambitious would try to benefit and to get as much as they could from this turbulence and commotion, to fish in these troubled waters. On the other hand, we know that the great mass of people believe anything they see; they have always been thus and have always been fuel for a fire that anyone may care to kindle. They need constant training and continual taking care .of, and without an educator they cannot reach their own perfection

Now we must ask if such a society, in such conditions, needs a leader who can take the reins of command in the place of the Prophet or not, so that the result of all the pains the Messenger of Allah took should not be dissipated. Is there not a need for a knowledgeable, political authority who is thoroughly acquainted with the Divine laws ?and who can guide and lead the people on the right path in the right way

The Shia holds that the generous Grace and Love of God and His infinite wisdom demand that after the Prophet the people should not be without a leader. Such a leader must be sinless and wise, so that his correctness of speech and action may be a guarantee and a true sign of a superior main, someone selected by God. He must take the reins of the Muslim community

p: ۱۹۴

in his hands and lead and guide them with extensive wisdom and foresight, without error, and this he must take from the Prophet of Islam. Because there is no reason for God, Who was considerate of the people in the time of the Prophet to change His .judgement and to withdraw His loving concern

How could it be possible that God, Who by His Grace created thousands of elaborate details for the protection and growth of our bodies, Who caused the eyebrows to grow so that the salty, bitter, tainted sweat of the forehead cannot hurt the eyes, and Who made the eyelashes also so that under their outspread canopy the eyes can be more beautiful and better protected, how can God, Who created these and many more known and unknown things, have neglected to appoint a goodly successor to ?the Prophet

Does not the bringing into existence of the best of communities, which is the aim of Islam need the selection of the best of leaders? Is not the appointment of a sinless leader, educator and Imam the basis of the contentment of society? Can Islamic ?society attain contentment and happiness without divine supervision and leadership

So if there is a need for the divine, sinless leader, and Islamic society wants a divine educator, how can it be said that this matter has been ignored by Islam and that the

?people have been left to themselves

In short, the same philosophy which demands the appointment of the Prophet also precisely demands that

.God introduce and appoint a successor through the Prophet

The Prophet of Islam (S) said in the latter part of his life: "O People, I swear before Allah that I have explained what will make you nearer to heaven (contentment) and (what will make you far from the Fire (error)".(۱)

With this explanation, how can it be said that the Prophet of Islam did not appoint his ?immediate successor

?Is the Qur'an Not Sufficient

The great and mighty Qur'an is the fundamental basis for every kind of Islamic concept. Like a mighty rock, all the fruitful buildings of Islamic knowledge have been made steady on it. It is the clear spring from which all the streams of insight flow. The .credibility and prestige of other religious foundations rest on it

But, on the basis of the proofs we shall give, one cannot be content with the Qur'an alone to solve the problems of leadership, the differences which crop up in Islamic .society, or the satisfying of the needs of the Muslim people

۱. Firstly because the Qur'an and its great and abundant contents need commentary and explanation. Since all the verses are not alike in clarity and openness, unacquainted and unknowing readers in the first moments of their journey may .become lost and not take the path to their destination

So the Prophet himself or those appointed by him who have a spiritual link with what is beyond the external world, must be a guide in this valley also, so that they can interpret and explain the ayahs according to

Usul Kafi vol. ۲, p. ۷۴ -۱

Allah's purpose. For if not, ordinary people will sometimes interpret incorrectly and will end up far from the thruth.(۱)

It is recounted that a thief was brought into the presence of the Abassid Caliph Mu'tasim so that he might have the punishment proscribed in the Qur'an to him. The command of the Qur'an is: "Cut off the hand of a thief." But Mu'tasim did not know from where the hand should be cut. He asked his Sunni 'ulema One of them said: "From the wrist." "From the elbow," another said.

Mu'tasim was not satisfied. He was forced to ask Imam Muhammad at-Taqi the ۹th Imam (a.s.) who was present, and he replied: "Four fingers must be cut off." "Why?"

"Since Allah has decreed in the Qur'an 'And that the places of sajdah are for Allah.' (۷۲:۱۸) That is the seven places of the body, of which one is the palm, which in sajdah contact the ground belong to Allah, they should not be cut off."(۲)

All those present accepted and were satisfied with his proof.

This kind of interpretation is in fact interpretation of the Qur'an by the Qur'an, and is peculiar to the descendants of the prophetic mission, and no-one, to whatever degree he may be a master of interpretation, is able to succeed in perfectly understanding interpretation in this way unless he has taken the habit from the Household of the Prophet and has taken them as his model.

۲. Another proof is that what we have said Concerning the need for

۱ - The great Prophet of Islam (S) said that everyone who interprets the Qur'an according to his own opinions will have the place in which he sits at the Resurrection made the site of the gathering together of fire. (Tafsir as vol. I, p. ۲۱)

.Nur ath-Thaqalayn vol. ۵, p. ۴۳۹ -۲

correct interpretation of the Qur’an concerns only one side of the Qur’an the exotic meaning and the commands of the Qur’an But in the shelter of these exotic words anti meanings, a deeper and wider aim, a spiritual profundity is concealed, especially .in the sections on knowledge, beliefs and the virtues

The respected Prophet (S) said: The Qur’an has a beautiful outer meaning and a (profound inner meaning.”(۱

He also said: “The Qur'an has profundity, and the profundity of that is deep too, up to (seven inner meanings.”(۲

Truly, all the Qur’an has, according to the words of the great exegetists, a hermeneutics and an inner meaning, and to arrive at them by thought and research alone is not possible. It is not explicable to all through words, for the ability to perceive and practice this is not given to all men. Only those near to God, the pure, those free from corruption, can comprehend this, and use it for the solution of the differences and incidents between men, and learn it, and then, by virtue of the immunity from .error and mistake that they have from God, teach it to others

These ones near to God, the slaves immune from error are the Prophet (S) and the :Household of the Prophet (a.s.) about whom the Qur’an said

Household of the Prophet; Allah desires only to put away from you abomination and (to cleanse you out.” (۳۳: ۳۳

There is also a hadith that only the Prophet and his Household, who are the original ones

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.Usul Kafi, vol. ۲ p. ۵۹۹ -۱

.Tafsir Safi, vol. ۱, p. ۳۹ -۲

(to be addressed by the Qur'an, can perceive all the truths of the Book.(۱

That is to say the Prophet who was addressed by Jibra'il and his Household, since they .are the family of the Prophet, are more acquainted with the meaning of the Qur'an

It is because of this connection (the Qur’an and the Household) that the Prophet said to the people in the last days of his life: “I leave two things in your trust, the Book of Allah and my descendants; if you attach yourselves to these two you will never go (astray.”(۲

The Qur’an needs a sinless, enforcing guarantor. Since the Qur'an is a fundamental .۳ law, a kind of constitution, it needs an enforcing guarantor and a power to implement it. But only he who like the Prophet (S) is free from error and who understands and .knows the Qur'an with competence can be the guarantor of its commands and laws

These special qualities are to be found in the beings of the Imams (a.s.), and the best witness to this is the few years of the leadership of Ali (a.s.), who, despite the difficulties which beset his holding of the rein of government, carried out to the end .the great and resplendent laws of Islam each and every one

As a postscript, the summary and fundamental of this lesson can be found in a discussion which students following the sixth Imam, Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.), had with .one of the Sunni school in the presence of the Imam

A man

.Tafsir Mir’at al-Anwar, p. ۱۶ -۱

Ibn Haubab Musnad Beirut, vol. ۳, p. ۱۷. al-Ghadir, vol. ۱, p. ۵۵ Ghayat al-Maryam p. -۲ .۲۱۲

from Damascus was given a meeting with Imam Sadiq (a.s.) and said that he had .come for a discussion with one of his students

.The Imam said, “Introduce him to Hisham.” Hisham was the youngest of his students

O Boy," said the man from Damascus, "ask me concerning the Imamate of this man" ".((.(Imam Sadiq (a.s

Hisham was angered by his lack of manners and shuddered But he concealed his .temper and began

"?Is your Creator more kind and loving towards His slaves or the slaves themselves"

".The Creator"

"?What has the loving Creator done for his slaves"

He has appointed a clear guidance and proof, to protect them from differences and" disunity, and to establish friendship an unity among them He has made clear to them ".their religious duties

"?Who is that guide"

".The Prophet"

"?Who is it after the death of the Prophet"

The Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Prophet of Allah"

Can the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Prophet prevent us from differences" "?today

".Yes"

So why do you and I who are both Muslims have a dispute or in other words, why" "?have you come here from Damascus a result of this difference

.The man from Damascus was silent and said no more

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said to him: "Why don't you speak up

What shall I say?" he replied. "If I say we have no difference then I lie. And just as I" said the Book of Allah and the Sunnah the Prophet should take away The difference

,between us, so this also is untrue because

in many instances, the Book of Allah and the Sunnah do not have a clear and obvious ".meaning that could dispel our differences

So the man from Damascus said that he wanted to ask the very same question from .Hisham. The Imam agreed

"?O Hisham. Who is the more loving towards people? God, or the people themselves"

".God"

Did he send them someone to protect the unit of Muslims and to take over their" "?control, to explain to them truth and falsity

"?Are you talking about the time of the Prophet, or about now"

".In the time of the Prophet, it was him; no, tell me about now"

Today it is this man who is seated here and to whom people come from every corner " of the land, and who gives us news of the heaven and the earth; and this knowledge ".was bequeathed to him from his father and so on back to the Prophet

"?How can I verify and accept this statement for myself"

".Go now and ask him anything you like"

".That's right, there is no other excuse; only I must ask"

Then Imam Sadiq (a.s.) told him about his journey and of the things that happened to him on his way, which only the man could know of. When he had explained so that no (doubt remained for him, the man declared his belief in the Imam.(۱

Questions

?What does the poet Mizami say .۱

?According to the text a storm would blow upon what and what would happen .۲

Who would try to fish in the troubled .۳

p: ۲۰۱

.Usul Kafi, vol. I, p. ۱۷۱-۱۷۳ -۱

?waters

?Who has always been fuelled for a fire .۴

?Who needs training and an educator .۵

?What needed to be preserved and how .۶

?What do the grace and love of God demand .۷

What kind of a leader did Muslims need after the Holy Prophet (according to Shia .۸ (Muslims

?What would this leader do for the Muslims .۹

?Did God reduce his attention to Muslims after the Holy Prophet .۱۰

?How has God arranged means for protection of the Human Body .۱۱

?What means has God arranged for protections of Human eyes .۱۲

What is the social aim of Islam and what kind of community does it intend to .۱۳ ?establish

?What kind of leader would such a society require .۱۴

Would God, who has arranged marvellous means for the protection of the Human .۱۵ ?Body, would not arrange for a leader to educate and lead an Islamic community

?Is the philosophy of prophet hood different from that for his successorship .۱۶

?What does the Hadith of Usool-e-Kafi vol. ۲. p. ۷۴ say .۱۷

?What is like a mighty rock in Islam .۱۸

?Why does the Holy Qur'an require commentaries .۱۹

?Who could be the best authority to inerpret the Holy Qur'an .۲۰

?Who did not know how to cut the hands of the thief and what did he do .۲۱

?What does verse ۱۸ chapter ۷۲ say .۲۲

?What was the basis of Imam Muhammad Taqis decision .۲۳

?What kind of interpretation is the kind Imam Muhammad Taqi applied .۲۴

?Can Qur'an be interpreted by personal opinions .۲۵

?What has the Holy Prophet said about such interpretations .۲۶

What .۲۷

p: ۲۰۲

?does Usuul Kafi vol. ۲, p. ۵۹۹ say

?Who can better understand the Holy Qur'an .۲۸

?What does Verse ۳۳ Ch. ۳۳ say .۲۹

?What does Tafsir Mira't Al-Anwar page ۱۶ say .۳۰

?What does Al-Ghadir vol. ۱, p. ۵۵ say .۳۱

What kind of qualifications does a executive authorities of laws of Qur'an must .۳۲ ?have

?What does the few years of the administration prove .۳۳

?What was the topic of discussion between Hisham and the man from Damascus .۳۴

?Can you answer Hishams Questions ۱-۶ .۳۵

?What did the man from Damascus say after the sixth question .۳۶

?Can you answer the questions of the man from Damascus ۱-۵ .۳۷

?What did Imam As-Sadiq tell the man about his journey .۳۸

Lesson ۲۵: The Spiritual Guidance of the Imam

point

The life of the Prophet (S), as well as his deeds, are a perfect manifestation of the Islamic culture and ideology. He was both the political leader and the legislative authority for the Muslims. He was the messenger of God who received revelations .from God and delivered the commands and laws from Allah to people

He implemented them in the field of Islamic government. His actions were the manifestation of the law, his behaviour pure virtue, and his instructions the guidance and leadership of a strong and wise man. He was not content merely to counsel and .advise but rather proceeded to establish a model society founded on true justice

In dealing with crime the Islamic system gives mundane sanction to the security and satisfaction within the society. It does not defer the punishment of those who damage

social happiness to another time. It carries out the prescribed punishment for these people in this world also. Government and leadership together formed the work of .this great man

The Islam system is distinct from other worldly systems of government. Together with this side of the coin, it always looks to the being of each individual, and it always recommends the keeping pace of Islamic laws with the pursuit of spiritual and human .virtues

This latter it is which today civilizations is left to oblivion, and gradually the festering and putrefying results of this are seen. It is because spirituality and moral values are forgotten. The Islamic system has placed special emphasis onto this important point, and the leadership has always established the basis of its philosophy on the spiritual .training of mankind

The majority of men are unaware of the reality of their own exalted human essence, since it is so subtle and delicate that it is only seen by the clear-sighted. In the understanding of the ordinary man, this verdant land of the existence of each human being is situated in an area far from his cogitation and ideation, and he cannot .conceive of this land, let alone be a leader towards

How can man, who, after the passing of centuries and centuries, has still not come to understand even half of the physical actions and reactions that govern his body, expect to know its metaphysical side? Or give guidance and a way to reach that far ?objective

Without any dispute, the

p: ۲۰۴

leader to this land must be someone the essence of whose existence is in union with the supernatural world and who is in relation with and knows this terrain from being a traveller in its known and unknown valleys. If one has not travelled how can he be a ?guide

Is it right to give up spiritual destiny? Should the spiritual genius and sublime essence of man be considered unnoticed and take him to be the equal of a beast and leave him ?in the world of appetites and the libido

.This is not the true status of man's greatness

Man, with his spiritual and celestial needs, and with the special genius which God has placed in his character, is the masterpiece of creation, and the sun of the world of created things. This is why he takes his place like the world-illuminating sun in heights

beyond reach, and sheds his warmth and heat on all quarters of the world like the .rays of the sun

Since it has been determined thus, man is no mere wanderer in the order of creation: he is a small speck, but the great Divine Sun shines on him, and regards him with his .special favour out of all creation

We can see the results of this favour from God to man along the length of human history in His sending of the prophets God sent the prophets on the basis of this love and favour so that they might lead men and take their great but turbulent spirit

.to the shore of that great salvation and eminence

The great Qur'an refers to this reality in numerous verses, as for instance, when :Ibrahim (a.s.) asks God

And, our Lord, do Thou send among them a Messenger, one of them, who shall recite" to them Thy signs, and teach them the Book and the Wisdom, and purify them; Thou (art the All-mighty the All-wise" (۲: ۱۲۹

In this verse we clearly see that apart from knowledge and wisdom and guidance, the purification of the soul, which is the same as spiritual training, is counted as one of the .essentials of the calling of the prophets

In the school of the illustrious Prophet, his followers benefit from this special training, and participate in the following of a dazzling and wondrous path of perfection. Salman Farsi, Abu Dhar, Miqdad, Ammar, Uways and many others are among this .distinguished group

Their beings were pure and righteous springs; they were purified from all badness; they wished for nothing apart from Allah, and saw nothing apart from Him. Only Allah .ruled in their beings, throughout their souls, hearts, spirits and bodies

Similarly, virtue and the refining of the spirit is not a superfluous matter of mere

formality, that we should be indifferent to, and set apart from all other matters of life, to be attended to only when we feel like it, or at our leisure. No, virtue is the builder of life and a part of it, even, much more important than it. For, according to the testimony of wisdom

and the senses, the great qualities of spiritual virtue and purity are so immense and so fathomless that man can with its protection leave his form and mould and reach to the spiritual life, and realise the high reality of his humanness; till he sees that which is .beyond sight

Indications of Spiritual Life in Islam

point

And whosoever does a righteous deed, be it male or female, a believer, We shall“ (surely give him to live a goodly life.” (۱۶: ۹۷

O believers, respond to Allah and the Messenger when He calls you to that which will“ (give you life.” (۸: ۲۴

It is obvious that the life, which is mentioned in the above verses, is not the ordinary life. It is nothing but the spiritual life, virtuous human existence, which can only be .obtained from the way of righteous action and refinement of the soul

?How is the Spiritual life Found

As with other phenomena, the finding of the spiritual life requires the fulfilment of certain conditions. The spiritual life is the fruit of man's behaviour and deeds; naturally, that behaviour and those deeds, which are formed by true and righteous .training which are taught by celestial teachings

The command and prohibition of God, which we call the shari'ah, stand in exact correspondence with the truths and realities of the world of creation and the realm of existence, that is to say, creation and genesis. Since we are unaware of the truths of

the universe, its workings, its ins and outs and its happenings for our intellects ate insufficient, we are ignorant of the behaviour which

p: ۲۰۷

builds our spiritual lives. But the Imam (a.s.) reveals these high truths and superior workings to man like a wise and loving teacher, with many clear explanations so that .we may become filled with bliss and reach to the spiritual life

So, the way of Islam (din) is the sum total of realities and instructions which are greater than our ordinary understanding and which Allah has explained by means of the Prophet and his pure, unsullied representatives, so that the spiritual life may take .root within us, and assure us of eternal bliss

Now, if we obey the command, salvation will be ours; if not, it is our loss. Just like a child who is placed under instruction, who hears only command and prohibition from his instructor, and who does what is required of him without asking why. Although he does not understand in the depths of the matter what it means, he will, after the passing of the days of his education, live a life of contentment, because of the virtue and praiseworthy ways of action, which were brought into action within him. However, if he revolts against carrying out the orders of his instructors, it will result in .inestimable loss to him

Life Guidance

point

Now let us see who is the guarantee for this spiritual life and its perfection, which ?surely needs a guide

Will he be found among ordinary men? Or will he be someone who speaks with sureness and dependability, who is in his behaviour from error, immaculate, and who himself stand

p: ۲۰۸

?on the pinnacle of the spiritual life

Until God guides someone completely Himself, He does not entrust to him the duty of .guiding others

Allah – He guides to the truth; and which is worthier to be followed – He who guides to“ the truth, or he who guides not unless he is guided? What the ails you, how you act?” ((۱۰:۳۵

More particularly, the Imamate is not leadership in the ordinary sense, for this is the duty of every Muslim, and not confined to the Imam. The meaning of guidance here is esoteric guidance; and those who have not found the spiritual life, to whom the realities of the universe have not been revealed, cannot take on this kind of .leadership

By looking into the ayahs of the Qur'an, which speak of Imamate and guidance, we can see that everywhere that Imamate is mentioned; the subject of guidance is also .mentioned in commentary and explanation

?What is Spiritual Guidance

The Imam, besides being an educator in the commands of Islam, the exotic side, is also the leader m the esoteric of Islam; he is the wall. That is to say, he takes man through the inner way, the man who has the predisposition and the worthiness, and .leads him towards perfection

This guidance, because it is carried out on the basis of spiritual blessing and inner .stations, is called esoteric guidance

Esoteric guidance is a superior station which the great prophets reached after the station of prophethood. Thus, Ibrahim (a.s.), after he had been made a prophet, was raised

.by God to the station of esoteric guidance

(Verily, I make you an Imam for mankind." (٢:١٢-۴"

When he had reached the station of walayat and esoteric guidance, the Imam (a.s.) can apply himself to great works, which seem miraculous or impossible from the point of view of ordinary people. The Qur'an tells how Asif ibn Barkhya, one of the counsellors of Sulayman (a.s.) could cause the throne of the Queen of Saba to come before Sulayman (a.s.) ahead of her own arrival, in a time shorter than the blinking of an eye, since he had a certain dominance over the supernatural world and could take .away the shutters covering the facts and realities of this world

Our sinless leaders and Imams - may peace be upon them are situated on a level greater and higher than Asif. The proof of this is the authoritative and documented histories of the narrators, where we find many stories of the spiritual guidance and .inner walayat of our Imams

Therefore, the Imam, since he is in the highest stage of spiritual life, has a kind of spiritual guidance and charisma, which can have an effect on the hearts of worthy and cause a in them, attracting them towards perfection. We can read in histories about the states and conditions of groups of followers of the Imams and how they .illuminated their times with their brilliance

The Man from Damascus

Ali ibn Khalid was a Zaydi i.e. he did not accept any of the Imam after the fourth' ,(.Imam, Zayn al-Abidin (a.s

and he lived in the time of the ninth Imam, Hazrat Muhammad Taqi - may Allah praise .him

He related that he had been in Samarra and he was informed that a man had been brought from Damascus to that place in captivity as a prisoner, who claimed to be a .prophet. 'Ali ibn Khalid went to see him, and asked him to relate his story

I was busy in worship," he began, "at the place which they say is the resting place of" the pure head of the noble martyr Imam Husayn (a.s.). One night, a man suddenly appeared in front of me, and told me to stand up. I stood up despite myself and went a short way with him when I found myself in the mosque at Kufah He asked me if I knew the mosque, and I said that I did, it was the mosque of Kufah He prayed, and I prayed with him, and then we set out again We had gone no distance at all when I noticed the mosque of Medina He asked for blessings on the Prophet of Allah, and we both prayed there. Then we left and set out once more. Then I noticed we were in Mecca. We circumambulated the Ka'abah left it, and then arrived at our original place, Damascus, after no time at all. Then that person vanished from my sight. A slight ....breeze came and brushed my face and went

A year after that adventure, I saw the very same"

p: ٢١١

man. I became greatly gladdened; he took me on the same journey, and like the first time we visited all those places, fully aware. But when he wanted to leave me, I said to him: 'I beseech you, who have such a great power as I see in you, tell me your name.' .He said: 'I am Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn Musa ibn Ja'far.' He was the ninth Imam

Now I proceeded to tell everyone I met of this extraordinary event, till news reached" Muhammad ibn Abdil-Malik Zayyat He ordered that I be arrested and accused of ".posing as a prophet. And now, as you see, I am in prison

Ali ibn Khalid asked him if he wanted him to write to Muhammad ibn Abdil Malik about' his case. The man told him to write. So he wrote, but in his answer Ibn Abdil Malik :wrote

Tell him that he can escape from his prison, if he wants, in the same way as he went" in the night from Damascus to Kufah and from there to Medinah and Mecca, and then ".back again to Damascus

Ibn Khalid was most depressed by this answer. In the morning, he went to the prison

to give the man the answer. But he saw there were many soldiers and a crowd of people coming and going around the prison, so he asked what had happened.

They told him that the prisoner who had claimed to be a prophet had escaped from the prison. No one knew how he had

escaped, by going through the ground or by flying!

Ali ibn Khalid said: "When I saw this, I left my own Zaydi creed and became a follower' of Hazrat Javad (a.s.), the ninth Imam."(١)

Maytham at–Tammar

Hazrat 'Ali (a.s.), chief among those who forbear, bought and freed Maytham. He asked him what his name was.

"Salim," replied.

"But I heard from the Prophet that your name, your true name, is Maytham."

"He spoke correctly, and you speak correctly; my name, my true name is Maytham."

"Then stay with the name the Prophet called you by, and leave the other name."

In this way Hazrat 'Ali (a.s.) bought and freed the slave, but he caste the noose of love around his neck so that he remained with him up to the last moment of his life – even death could not break this link.

Maytham was a free man who had amazing ability, and he gradually attained great honour in the school of 'Ali (a.s.), and took his place among the group of the friends of 'Ali.

He became aware of the subtleties and discovered the realities. He had great love for 'Ali (a.s.); like a thirsty plant in the rain, he was inspired by him. For him he grew; he was totally absorbed in him. With him the light of his heart and the rejoicing of his soul

.increased He never sold this happiness to the world of affluence

One day, Hazrat 'Ali (a.s.) said to him: "When I am gone, you will be hanged; they will scar your body

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۱- Shaykh Mufid, Irshad; p. ۳۰۴-۵.

with weapons, and on the third day your beard will be stained with the blood of your eyes and mouth. They will hang you beside the house of 'Amr ibn Harith, together with nine others. The tree they hang you from will be the smallest; come, I will show you ".the date-palm from whose branch you will be hung

.And then he showed Maytham the tree

.The years passed and Hazrat 'Ali (a.s.) was martyred

.The Umayyids gained power over the people

Maytham occasionally went out to look at the tree, prayed there, and spoke to it: "O ".tree! May Allah bless you! I have been created for you, and you grew for me

In the year of his martyrdom, Maytham went into the precincts of the Ka'abah and .met Umm Salmah

I have heard your name from the Prophet," she said, "that he recommended you to" ".('Ali (a.s

.Maytham asked her about Imam Husayn (a.s.), and learnt that he had left the city

Convey my salam to him," he said, "and tell him it will not be long before I and he will" ".see each other again in the next world before the Lord

Umm Salmah ordered that perfume should be brought to scent Maytham's beard, and then said to him: "Soon your beard win be coloured by your blood, in the true way of

".the Prophet and his family

Maytham then went to Kufah, where two of Ibn Ziyed's agents arrested him, and took "?him before the latter. This exchange took place 'where is your God

Lying in wait"

p: ۲۱۴

".among the oppressors, and you are one of them

"?What did your master, 'Ali say about you and I"

He said you would hang me together with nine other martyrs, and that my gallows" ".would be the shortest

".I want to go against the word of your lord, and I shall kill you in another way"

How can you? He learnt from the Prophet, and the Prophet learnt from Allah. Can you" go against Allah? I also know the place of my martyrdom, and I am the first Muslim in whose mouth they will put a bridle Abdullah ibn Ziyad, his eyes wide open, gave the order to take him immediately to prison. In that prison Maytham gave Mukhtar :Thaqafi the good news of his liberty

You will kill Ibn Ziyad' he told him, "in revenge for the prince of martyrs, Hazrat" ".(Hussyn (as

And so it was Maytham was taken to the place of his sacrifice, to the place of his spiritual departure, the place from which his spirit was to soar to the highest and greatest heights of human spirituality. They hung him beside the house of 'Amr ibn .Harith, from that very tree that he had been shown

The people gathered round him, and on the gallows he took the opportunity to tell them of the virtues of Hazrat 'Ali (a.s.) He spoke and unlocked the hearts of the people .and they under stood

Ibn Ziyad was informed that Maytham had defamed him, so he ordered him to be gagged so that he should be

unable to speak. Then they attacked him with weapons as Hazrat 'Ali (a.s.), had foretold.

"Allahu Akbar!" he cried.

At the end of the third day, the blood from his eyes and mouth flowed down and stained his beard - may the peace of Allah be with him.(۱)

Uways al-Qarni

The Prophet said: "The scent of heaven is wafting over from Qami. O Uways al- Qami, I am eager to see you. Anyone who sees you should give you my salam!"(۲)

When everyone swore allegiance to Hazrat 'Ali (a.s.) at Dhi Qar, he said: "From Kufah a thousand soldiers, no more no less will come and swear their allegiance to me."

Then they arrived and Ibn 'Abbes counted them, but found only ۹۹۹ persons. He was puzzled why there was one person missing.

After a moment, a man came near with armour a sword and a shield, and the other accoutrements of war; he went up to Hazrat 'Ali (a.s.) and said: "I want to swear allegiance to you up to death and self-sacrifice."

"What is your name?" said 'Ali.

"Uways."

"Are you Uways al-Qami?"

"Yes."

"Allahu Akbar! My beloved Prophet, the Prophet of Allah may Allah praise him - told me

that I would meet one of his followers caned Uways al-Qarni who was one of the party of Allah and His messenger, and who would die a martyr. A numberless group ".would intercede for him

(Thus it was that he was martyred in the service of Hazrat 'Ali (as.)(٣

Uways is well known for his spirituality as having a high position. His pleasure

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.Ibid, p. ١۵٢-١۵۴ -١
.Abbas Qummi, Safinah al-Bihar, vol. ١, p. ۵٣' -٢
.Usd al- Ghabah, vol. I p. ١۵٢ -٣

was worship, and he had no interest in the things of this world. We can learn from the .sayings of Uways the extraordinary nature of the spiritual life of this man

I swear by Allah, the thought of death and the fear and trembling at the last days," ".leaves no place for happiness in this world for the man of faith

When we bid to good and forbid from evil they abuse us but with all that we stand up" ".for the Truth of Allah

Qanbar

Qanbar also was one of those brave people who reached high station by the rays of .(.the spiritual power of the Prophet (S) and 'Ali (a.s

He did not fear to tell the truth and to seek the way of righteousness. Although in the eyes of the people of this world he was no more than a slave, in the path of spiritual .(.stations he was intimate to the secrets of 'Ali (a.s

The live, powerful, hard-hitting words with which this iron man replied to Hajjaj ibn Yusuf, the bloodthirsty executioner who had the cruelty of a murderer and a criminal, .have become well known

"?Hajjaj asked him: "What was your work in the service of 'Ali

" I made ready his water for wudu"

"?When he had finished wudu what did he used to say"

He used to recite this ayah: 'So when they forgot what they were reminded of, We" opened unto them the gates of everything until, when they rejoiced in what they were ,doing, We seized them suddenly, and behold

they were sore confounded. So the last remnant of the people who did evil was cut (off. Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds."(۱

"?I presume that ayah speaks about me"

.Yes," said Qanbar with perfect heroism"

"?If I kill you, what can you do"

".I shall become a man of bliss, and you a man of wretchedness"

"!Confess that you have left 'Ali's service"

"?If I leave his way, will I be guided to a better way` '

Hajjaj could not answer this question, so he said: "I am your killer. Whatever way you ".wish, let me know, and I shall kill you in this way

' .I leave that to you"

"?Why"

Because however you kill me I shall kill you in that way in the next life. 'Ali, my master," ".told me that I should be beheaded cruelly and unjustly

(So Hajjaj ordered that he be beheaded.(۲

Questions

۱. What are the facts that serve as a foundation and corner stone in the project if we assume Islam to be as such?

۲. What was of the major attitudes of the Holy Prophet? a) Was it giving lectures, speeches, teachings, administration, or giving judgements?

۳. How does Islam deal with criminal activities?

۴. Does it leave a criminal case for judgement of God in the next life?

۵. If judgement is in Islam is based on worldly aspects of life alone or related to the facts of the next life?

۶. Do human beings know their assents properly?

۷. What steps has Islam taken to educate people spiritually?

۸. What facts are ignored in modern civilization?

۹.

۱- Irshad. p. ۱۵۵.

۲- Irshad. p. ۱۵۵.

Can men who still do not know about the physical aspects of their lives pass judgement about their metaphysical needs?

۱۰. Can one be a guide without first travelling a road?

۱۱. Can we ignore our spiritual destiny?

۱۲. Can we consider ourselves just like animals without any spiritual values?

۱۳. Why is man considered the son of the world of the created things in a masterpiece

?that they are in

?Why do man receive special favours from God .۱۴

?What is a very good favour that man has received from God .۱۵

?What does verse ۱۲۹ ch. ۲ say .۱۶

?What fact is an essential task for the Prophet .۱۷

?Can you mention three trainees from the school of the Prophet .۱۸

?How was the attitude of these people towards Allah .۱۹

?What form of progress can spiritual virtue bring to man .۲۰

?What does verse ۹۷ ch. ۱۶ and verse ۲۴ ch. ۸ say .۲۱

?How are virtues spiritual progress achieved .۲۲

?Do we know all the “ins” and “outs” of the world .۲۳

?Why do we need the Imam and what they would do for us .۲۴

?How can the sharia be helpful to us .۲۵

?What is greater than our understanding and why .۲۶

?What would obeying and disobeying of sharia do to us .۲۷

?What does verse ۳۵ ch. ۱۰ say .۲۸

?What is spiritual guidance .۲۹

?What are some of the characteristics of an Imam .۳۰

?What does verse ۲۴ ch. ۴ say .۳۱

?What kind of power would a person who becomes a wali receive .۳۲

Why do our Imams have greater power and authority than .۳۳

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?Asif

?Why can the Imams better attract people to perfection .۳۴

?Why did Ali ibn Khalib become a follower of Imam As-Sadiq .۳۵

?What happened to the prisoner and why he was imprisoned .۳۶

?Who bought and freed Maytham AT-Tammar and why .۳۷

?What kind of relations did Maytham At-Tammar have with Imam Ali .۳۸

?What kind of a tree did Imam Ali show to him and why .۳۹

?Who did Maytham speak to in the percent of Ka'abah .۴۰

?What did he say about Imam Hussein .۴۱

?Why did Umm salmah offer perfumes to Maytham .۴۲

?Why was Maytham arrested and by who .۴۳

?Who did Maytham give good news in prison and what news was it .۴۴

?Where was Maytham hung .۴۵

?Why did people gather around him .۴۶

?Why did Ibn Ziad cut off the tongue of Maytham .۴۷

?What happened to Uwayth .۴۸

?How many people pledged loyalty to Imam Ali .۴۹

?What has Uwayth said about death .۵۰

?Who was Cumber and what were some of his virtues abilities .۵۲

?What kind of conversation took place between Cumber and Hajjaj Ibn Yusuf .۵۳

?What did Hajjaj do to him .۵۴

Lesson ۲۶: Amir al-Muminin Ali , the Chosen Successor of the Prophet

(The Successor to the Prophet (S

The Twelve-Imam Shi'ites believe that after the Prophet of Allah, the leadership of the world of Islam fell to Amir al-Mu'minin, 'Ali (a.s.), and then to his eleven pure (descendants.(۱

This idea, this belief, is as clear as the rays of the morning sun, and those who are .unprejudiced and impartial will have no cause for doubt in it

Jabir ibn 'Abdillah, one of the special companions of the Prophet (S) said: 'The day the ayah

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Al-Ghadir" and 'Allamah al-Amini. The encyclopaedic work 'al-Chadir the great"' -۱ enterprise of the late mujahid 'Allamah Sheikh 'Abdul'-Husayn al-Amini - may the mercy of Allah rest with him - is written around the hadith of al-Ghadir. This great book, which is the achievement of a lifetime of pure seeking by this scholar, is in many volumes and is in the Arabic language. Till now, ۱۱ volumes have been published. The exposition of the book was put together in a strong and easy style, and its contents are so well reasoned that according to the acknowledgement of the leaders and scholars of the Sunni school, the question of the legitimacy of the Shi'ites has been revived. It has transformed the attitude of the Sunnis towards the Shi'ites and has rendered a great service to these two groups May the author's name he always well known. Much use has been made of this great book during the writing of the present .lesson

concerning obedience to Allah, the Prophet and those vested with authority was

'?revealed(١) I asked the Prophet: We know Allah and the Prophet, but who is the third

He said: They are the Imams, my successors, the first of whom is Ali ibn Abi Talib, then, in order, Hasan, Husayn, Ali ibn Husayn, Muhammad ibn 'Ali, who was called Baqir in the Torah, and whom you, Jabir, will meet and to whom you will convey my salami then, after him, Ja'far ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq, Musa ibn Ja'far, 'Ali ibn Musa, Muhammad ibn Ali, 'Ali ibn Muhammad, Hasan ibn 'Ali, and in the end the son of Hasan "(ibn 'Ali will come, whose name will be the same as mine (Muhammad Abul-Qasim).(٢

The First Leader

No society, at any time or place, can stand free and liberated without a leader. This is always true. Inspired by this reality, we can proceed to say that anyone who is the ruler over a society, if he is dedicated to its strength and happiness, must necessarily strive to protect it and must, to the extent of his power, ability, knowledge and foresight, take into consideration the present, future and even the distant future of that society, and plan and programme so that the destiny of that society may become .near to the realm of ideal contentment

It is because of this necessity that rulers, even during short journeys, appoint a .deputy. This is remarked in every case of leadership

A head of a family, a headmaster, a foreman

.See IV; ٥٩ -١

Safi, Muntakhab al-Athar, p. ١٠١. The writer quotes so similar hadith From Sunni and -٢ .Shia sources

in a factory, all put a deputy in their place for the absence of a few hours, and they give instructions on the orders of the one they replace in their absence. This matter is .so obvious that it needs no proof

(The Devoted and Prudent Prophet (S

The great Prophet, who was the leader of world Islamic society, observed this very principle. Wherever the light of Islam shone for the first time, however much or little it shone, he always appointed a worthy administrator for that place to look after its .affairs

For armies which he sent off on jihad he appointed a specific commander of the troops, and he sometimes appointed several persons as assistant leaders to the .commander, so that if one was killed, the army would not be without a commander

Thus we know of persons whom the Prophet appointed as his deputies and representatives whenever he travelled from Medina so that Medina should not be without a leader m his absence

The Shi'ites ask how, with this evidence, it is consistent with the wisdom of the Prophet (S) that he should die without appointing a successor. Which of the following :possibilities accords with reason

- ?Was Islamic society, after the death of the Prophet (S) not in need of a leader again

- Or did the Prophet (S) attach no importance to the community of Muslims after he ?had gone

- ?Or were concern and prudence something he could do nothing about

- ?Or did he not know who was the most worthy successor

Which of these possibilities accords with

?reason

With his all-embracing love, and the signs of leadership and determining of duties which he gave to the Muslims in all the ups and downs of their lives, how could the ?Prophet of Islam (S) not give an order on this great matter

In the light of these realities, the followers the Imams proceeded to investigate the first and original texts and documents of Islam, and in this investigation they came across an enormous quantity of sources, which their Islamic wisdom and consciences judged to be the most important, and they arrived at this result: that there are dear, sufficient, exact orders from the Prophet (S) about the detailing of a successor: the ayah of wildcat, the hadith of Ghadir, the hadith of Safinah, the hadith of Thaqalayn, and many more, all of which 'are tested, explained and examined with great details in these great books. From all these we shall select the hadith of Ghadir and we shall .seek to judge its value in an unprejudiced manner

The Historical Hadith of Ghadir

point

In the tenth year of the hijrah, the Prophet (S) set out for Mecca to perform the rites of Hajj. This H. ad was under taken in the last years of the dear Prophet's life and for .('this reason history has given it the name of the "Farewell Hajj" (hijjah al- wida

Those who accompanied the Prophet, who were pressing forward in their stirrups with eagerness to follow him, to see and learn the true Hajj, numbered about ۱۲۰,۰۰۰. Some groups also became attached to

p: ۲۲۳

.him in the town of Meccah

Then, when resuming to Medina after completing the Hajj, on the ۱۸th day of Dhul- :hijjah, at Ghadir Khumm, this ayah was

O Messenger, deliver that which has been sent down to thee from thy Lord; for if" thou cost not, thou wilt not have delivered His Message. Allah will protect thee from (men." (۵: ۶۷

Thus a great message reached the Prophet from Allah. The edges of the caravan .were slowly rolling along

"...Allah has given a command...Let everyone await the command"

Thereupon, the Prophet (S) gave the order that everyone should stop moving and come to a halt; and they did. Many travellers stood there on the order of the Prophet of Allah (a.s.) to hear the news. About the desert we have been told, 'Ghadir Khumm is a plain without water, parched'. It is midday and the heat of the sun was scorching. What is the news for which the Prophet is keeping the people standing in such a place, ?at such a time

Now the sound of adhan is heard. The Prophet performs the prayer with the people, and then camel saddle-packs are built up to form a raised platform. The Prophet stands on the top of them. People catch their breath, and are as quiet as the sands of .the desert. They are waiting for the news

The Prophet starts. His speech, like the spray of drops that shower from a waterfall, is cool and soothing; it calms the heat, and the people quench their thirst under

p: ۲۲۴

the sun by listening with their souls. After praising Allah, the Prophet continues: "I and "?you, we have shouldered every responsibility. Don't you agree

We are witnesses that you have delivered the message to us, that you made every" "!effort in this direction. May Allah give you the best reward

Do you witness to the Unity of Allah, and to the prophethood of his cave, Muhammad." And to heaven and hell, death and the resurrection, and life after death?" "We do ".witness to these

May Allah be our witness!" And then he continued, saying to the people: "A people; I" and you, we shall see one another beside Kawthar. Be careful after me how you deal "?with two precious jewels." "O Prophet, what are these two

The Book of Allah, and my descendants. Allah told me that these two are not be" separated from one another till they reach me beside Kawthar. Do not go ahead of

".them, for you will be ruined. Do not fall behind them, for you will also be ruined

Then he raised the hand of 'Ali, Amir al-Mu'minin (as.), so that everyone could see him .and know him. Then, in the same position, he read the divine farman of succession

O people. Who is more deserving among the believers to have wilayat and" "?guardianship over them

".Allah and the Prophet know best"

Allah gave me wilayat and I am more worthy than the believers and the followers" themselves. Therefore to whosoever I am his (mawla) master and guardian, 'Ali is his guardian

p: ۲۲۵

and master.(۱) O Allah, be the friend of his friends, and the enemy of his enemies. Help .anyone who helps him, and punish anyone who rebels against him

".Now everyone who is present must tell those who are absent"

:The people had not dispersed when the following ayah was revealed

Today I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed my blessing upon " (you, and I have approved Islam for your religion." (۵:۳

Then the Prophet cried out: "Allahu Akbar! The religion of Allah has been perfected, ".and He is pleased with my prophethood and the Imamate of 'Ali after me

After this ceremony, people felicitated Amir al-Muhninin. Among the foremost of the companions who felicitated him were Abu Bakr and 'Umar who said: "How good for ".you, O 'Ali, to have become the master of me and every believing man and woman

The Chain of Narration of the Hadith of Ghadir

From the point of view of its chain of narration, this hadith is so strong that it is .probably unique

One hundred and ten of the companions of the Prophet (S) who were present at Ghadir have narrated it from the Prophet (S) without any intermediary, and also eighty-four of the followers, those who knew the companions.

Aware and unprejudiced scholars, be they historians or commentators or whatever, from the Sunni school have mentioned the matter of Ghadir with much documentation in their books. The names of three hundred and fifty such scholars are mentioned in the book 'al-Ghadir'(۲).

Many of the great Islamic scholars have independently written books on this subject, and

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۱- According to Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, the Imam of Hanbalites, the Prophet (S) repeated this sentence four times.

۲- see footnote above abpout the Al-Ghadir encyclodpedia.

twenty-six such writers have been recorded in 'al-Ghadir', together with the particulars of each of their books.

Dictionary compilers have related the story of Ghadir under the entry of 'Ghadir' or 'Mawla' (master).

So there is not the smallest doubt, not the least shadow, over the chain of narration of the hadith of Ghadir. Unless for that handful of people who can stand in the light of the sun anti feel its warmth on their skin but then say that there is no light or warmth

A Short Investigation into the Meaning of the Hadith of Ghadir

The hadith of Ghadir with the signs contained within it and without it, is so striking that everybody must in all fairness notice, and then become certain, that Amir al-Mu'minm, 'Ali (a.s.), became the first successor to the Prophet (S).

Now let us proceed to an elucidation and an unlocking of some of these signs and

.testimonies

The word ‘mawla’ which we come across in this hadith, is one of the clearest words .۱ .which can be used in this area

Mawld, in this hadith, means someone who has the stations of wilayat and Imamate, and can give his opinion and command on it what he wants has priority over all other wants. For this reason, before he said: “He whose master (mawla) I am”, he said “O ”?People, who among the believers is more deserting

The meaning of the priority of the Prophet (S) is that his wish comes before the wish of the people, and that whatever he says or does in an authority for the people. People follow

p: ۲۲۷

him, and in fact he has wilayat and guardianship over them. Now, we can see that just as in the first sentence the priority and wilayat of the Prophet (S) is mentioned, so in the following sentence, his priority and wildcat must be spoken of with the same meaning, so that there can be some connection in meaning between the two .sentences

Therefore the correct and complete meaning, which we get from these few sentences, is as the Prophet (S) said: “Am I, compared with you, not more deserting?” .“Yes, you!” Everyone replied

So, this being deserving, this priority and wilayat which I have as regards you, 'Ali“ ”.also has, and after me, he will be the Mawla of all Muslims and my successor

Thus, in this hadith, there is no question of any other meaning for 'mawla' apart from priority, wilayat and Imamate and any other meaning in its place is entirely irrelevant. We should also note that the Prophet of Islam kept people standing in this great heat. This historical fact makes it clear that the matter has a special importance; for, if not, no reasonable man would suppose that the Prophet would detain people under such conditions when his purpose was only to remind people of a trivial matter, for

.example, that 'Ali was his friend

A second proof is that after this the Prophet said: “O Allah, help those who help 'Ali, .۲ ”.and keep far from Thy Mercy those who refuse help to 'Ali

The Prophet (S) knew that after

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him Hazrat 'Ali (a.s.) would take official command of power and the army, and people would have to help him so that Islam would take root. For Islamic government needs just and obeyed commanders, and it is necessary that all people obey the Prophet's successor. Therefore he prayed for Hazrat 'Ali's helpers and cursed his opponents so that in this way too the people would understand that to oppose Hazrat 'Ali would .bring about the anger of Allah and the curses of the Prophet

In the beginning of his speech, the Prophet said: “Do you witness to the Unity of .۳ ”?Allah and the prophethood of his slave, Muhammad

.We do,” Hey replied“

Who is your wali and Mawla To whoever I am his Mawla 'Ali will also be his Mawla“

It is clear that the meaning of the wilayat of Hazrat Ali after the witnessing of the Unity of Allah and the prophethood and wilayat of the Prophet, is the Imamate, because, with any other meaning, the connection between the sentences would be broken, and we know that the Prophet (a.s.) was one of the most eloquent and .accurate of speakers

After the meeting were over, the people congratulated Amir al-Mu'minim. It is .۴ obvious that this felicitation was because they had accepted the truth 'Ali being appointed that day to a high station by Allah and the Prophet. If there had been .another reason, felicitation would have had no place

O Messenger, deliver that which has been sent down to thee from thy“ .۵

Lord; for if thous dost not, thou wilt not have delivered his Message. Allah will protect (thee from men." (۵: ۶۷

According to scholars of the Sunni school, this ayah was revealed on the day of Ghadir about the matter of the succession of Hazrat 'Ali - may Allah bless him. As a sample, let us see what the great Sunni commentator and historian, Hafiz Abu Ja'far :Muhammad ibn Jarir at-Tabari has to say

After this ayah, which was revealed at Ghadur Khumm, the Prophet said: 'Jibra'il..." has brought a command from Allah that we should halt in this place, and to announce to all, black or white, that 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, my brother, my executor (wasi), is my ".successor and the Imam after me

The splendid, magnificent poems and odes which the poets and writers of the times .۶ from those days up to now have composed on the subject of Ghadir and the succession of Amir alMutminin, Hazrat 'Ali (a.s.), are, apart from their literary importance, a strong proof in the matter of our discussion, for they have all acknowledged and commented upon the speech of Ghadir Khumm in connection with .wilayat and the Imamate

The poems and the names of the poets have all been recorded, and those who are acquainted with Arabic literature can consult the book of al-Ghadir mentioned .previously

In this great book, the poems and many of the names of the poets who composed poems about Ghadir Khumm from the first century AH through the subsequent centuries

.have been mentioned in order and analysed

Our great Prophet (S) and Imams (a.s.) have ordered that the ۱۸th day of Dhu'l- .۷

hidjah be kept as a true Muslim 'id, so that the event of Ghadir might be remembered .every year and not fall into oblivion

Thus Abu Rayhan al-Biruni, the famous fifth-century (A.H.) Iranian scholar, in his book - The Chronology of Ancient Nahons, and also Ibn Talhah ash-Shafi'ism his book, .Matalib as-Su'ul, name the day of Ghadir as one of the 'ids of Islam

Abu Mansur ath-Tha'alabi, the famous writer and scholar, also wrote in his book .Thimar al-Qulub that the event of Ghadir is one of the greatest nights in Islam

Objections. Whenever Amir al-Mutminin, Hazrat 'Ali (a.s.), and the other Imams .۸ reasoned about the hadith of Ghadir with objectors and in front of opposers, no-one raised any objection about its significance or about its connection with the Imamate .and the succession of Amir al-Mutminin who was not reduced to silence

One day in Kufah, Amir al-Mu'minin gave a speech during which he said: "Anyone who was present at Ghadir, and heard with his own ear the Prophet appoint me as his successor, stand up. Only those who heard the Prophet with their own ear, not those ".who heard from others who were there

A number of people rose up. Ahmad ibn Hanbal, the Imam of the Hanbali sect, says that there were thirty people who stood up that day, and testified to having heard the .hadith of Ghadir

It should be remembered

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that this event took place twenty years after Ghadir; that some of the companions of the Prophet (S) were not present on that day in Kufah, or had died since, and that .some also, for various motives, did not testify

The leader of the free, Hazrat Imam Husayn (a.s.), also asked during a speech he gave to the Islamic community in Mecca, among seven hundred of the pious (companions and followers of the Prophet (S

Do you know that the Prophet appointed 'Ali to the Khlifate and the Imamate at“ ”.Ghadir, and ordered those present to tell those who were absent

”.May Allah be witness that it was so“

We shall end this lesson with a foreword which Shaykh Muhammad Dahduh, the Sunni Imam and the spiritual leader of the town of Aleppo, wrote for the book al-Ghadir. We .have abbreviated it

The book al-Ghadir confirms the facts, and equally refutes the superstitions. It“ expounds some things, which we were ignorant of, and cancels out sayings which we .have kept in our hearts for centuries

Indeed, past events had been related in a way which made us say: 'We do not know“ where these come from, and we do not want to think about their secrets', whereas we should have learnt from these events, and we should have conducted research .into historical problems on a higher level

As we have seen, before the book al-Ghadir the general knowledge of the Sunnis“ about the historical reality of Ghadir was only slight, but now and after this, as the

p: ۲۳۲

parts of al-Ghadir are published, they will, on the contrary, see a boiling sea overflowing with impressive arguments, clear proofs and brilliant knowledge. What I see in al-Ghadir says with one one voice: 'The radiance of the moon cannot be '”.concealed

Questions

۱. ?What is the Shai Muslim belief about the successor of the Holy Prophet

۲ . Where, why, and by whom Imam Ali was declared the successor of the Holy ?Prophet

۳. ?What kind of book Al-Ghadir and what does it prove and how

?What did Jabir ask Prophet about IV: ۵۹ .۴

?What Jabir mean by whom is the third and was the adversary from the prophet .۵

?What must the leader of society do .۶

?Who do must of the people of reason do in the time of their absence .۷

?What would the Prophet do about the people of a new Muslim committee .۸

?How would the Holy Prophet organize the army of Muslim defences .۹

?What would the Holy Prophet do before going on a journey .۱۰

What do Shia Muslims believe about the Holy Prophet's deputies and what . ۱۱ ?questions do they ask

?What have the followers of the Imam found in their investigation .۱۲

?When, where, and why did the Hadith of Ghadir come into the public .۱۳

?What does verse ۶۵ ch. ۵ say .۱۴

?What did the Holy Prophet do when verse ۶۵ ch. ۵ was revealed to him .۱۵

How was the weather when the Prophet called everyone to listen to his . ۱۶ ?declaration

?Where is Ghadir Khumm and what kind of place is it .۱۷

What were .۱۸

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?questions asked by the people to the Prophet

?What did Prophet say he would leave behind among the people .۱۹

?Whose hands did the Prophet raise .۲۰

۲۱. What did the Holy Prophet say about wilayat?

۲۲. What does verse ۳ chp. ۵ say?

۲۳. Who was congratulated by the crowd after the ceremony?

۲۴. How many people have reported the Hadith of Ghadir?

۲۵. How is the condition of the Hadith of Ghadir in terms of authority?

۲۶. How would you prove that the Hadith of Ghadir is authentic?

۲۷. What is the meaning of the word mawla?

۲۸. What is the authority of the Holy Prophet over the people?

۲۹. What kind of authority according to Hadith Imam Ali has over the people?

۳۰. What is the second proof in support of the authority of Imam Ali?

۳۱. What are the contents of the third proof?

۳۲. What kind of authority does the third proof establish in favour of Imam Ali?

۳۳. What are the contents of the fourth proof?

۳۴. How is verse ۶۷ ch. ۵ related to ۴?

۳۵. About who and what according to Sunni Muslim scholars have this verse revealed?

۳۶. What are the contents of the sixth proof?

۳۷. What are the contents of the seventh proof?

۳۸. What are the contents of proof eight?

۳۹. What has Shaikh Muhammad Dahduh said about the book Al-Ghadir?

Lesson ۲۷: A Brief History of the Saqifah

point

Muslims maintain that without any doubt and in all certainty the Prophet of Islam (S) is without sin or error, and that his faultless speech is the same as reality and is the wish of Allah. If

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it were otherwise, they say, Allah could not have commanded unconditional obedience to him. So his command is Allah's command, and it is an absolute necessity .to obey him

What is more, we can see on the basis of the ayahs quoted below that the Prophet - may Allah bless and praise him - had the right of jurisdiction over the people, that his order took precedence over everyone else's idea or opinion, and that his commands :on social or other matters had to be carried out

(The Prophet has a greater claim on the believers than they have themselves." (۳۳: ۶"

It is not for any believer, man or woman, when Allah and His Messenger have" (decreed a matter, to have a choice in the matter." (۳۳: ۳۶

An examination of this ayah anti its explanation makes it clear that the decree of the. Prophet in every mailer, even in personal matters, is binding, since the ayah was revealed concerning an individual matter, viz. the marriage of Zayd and Zaynab. Zaynab was the daughter of the Prophet's uncle, and Zayd was a slave whom the .Prophet freed

The Prophet of Islam (S), so as to break the pre- Islamic custom whereby the noble and rich were not prepared to many outside their own, ordered Zaynab to marry Zayd. The false pride and inappropriate arrogance which had been inherited from .pre-Islamic times forbad her to take Zayd as a husband

But this ayah makes it clear that even in personal matters the Prophet's command was

(to be obeyed, so Zaynab married him and was content.(۱

But no, by thy Lord! they will not believe till they make thee judge between them,“ then they shall find in themselves no impediment touching thy verdict, but shall (surrender in full submission.” (۴: ۶۵

?Is the Prophet Subject to the Opinion of the Majority

Some Sunnis say that in social matters the opinion of the majority is over-ruling, to .the degree that the Prophet himself must obey

A deeper look at the ayahs mentioned above would make it clear that this is invalid. Now we shall proceed to an investigation of their evidence and claims and then .answer them

:'Their evidence is ayah ۱۵۹ of Surah 'Al Imran

It was by some mercy of Allah that thou wast gentle to them; hadst thou been harsh“ and hard of heart, they would have scattered from among thee. So pardon them, and pray forgiveness for them, and take counsel with them in the affair; and when thou (art resolved put thy trust in Allah, surely Allah loves those who put their trust.” (۳: ۱۵۹

The answer to this is that this ayah also gives clear evidence that the Prophet (S) is not subject to the opinion of the majority. In other words, the right of jurisdiction belongs to the Prophet even in social matters, and he has a duty, after consultation, to :put his view into practice, not the opinion of others, since it says

Take counsel with them in the affair, and when thou art resolved, put thy trust in“ ”.Allah

If it had been otherwise, and the

.Tafsir Nur ath- Thaqalayn; vol. ۴, p. ۲۸۰ -۱

:view of others was to be acted upon. it should have said

".When the opinion of people has been obtained on a matter, accept it and carry it out"

But we see that the ayah was not revealed in this sense. What is more, there is .evidence in history, the view of the Sunnis. For example, in the peace of Hudaybiyyah

The Prophet of Islam (S) left Medina to visit the Ka'bah. Near Mecca, the representatives of the unbelievers of the Quraysh met with him and said that the Quraysh were not prepared to admit him into Mecca. He replied that he had not come .for war, but only to visit the Ka'bah

After much discussion, the Quraysh were prepared to make a peace treaty, and the Prophet, with some special conditions, agreed, although the Muslims were not happy with the agreement and wanted to enter Mecca that day.(۱) The Prophet then told the Muslims; "I am the slave and Prophet of Allah . I will never turn away from the (command of Allah, nor will He let me go."(۲

Here, an honest reasonable question would be, what then is the meaning of the ?Prophet consulting with people at all

His consultations were part of a policy both of respecting and showing the value of the views of the people, and of using reason and thought in the way of progress of Islam. Also, when faced with some obstructions by some of the tribal leaders, consultations were held with them, because, by the value, which they

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.Sirah ibn Hisham, vol. ۳, p. ۳۲۱ -۱
.Tarikh of Tabari, vol. ۳, p. ۱۵۴۶ -۲

gave to consultation, and by the fact that they saw themselves sharing in the work, they desisted from their destructiveness. However, in this kind of counsel meeting,

the Prophet never subjected himself to the majority opinion, and, if he paid attention to the opinion of some person or group, it was, in fact, because that was also his own .opinion

?Did Consultation Take Place after the Death of the Prophet

We have seen and understood that it has been proved that the opinion of the Prophet was above the views of everyone, even the view of the majority, and that it was the sure view of the Prophet (S) that he selected Hazrat 'Ali (a.s.) to be his successor on .the day of Ghadir and informed the people of his decision

So, consultations aimed at appointing a successor after the Prophet (S) are clearly against the wish of Allah and His Prophet, and are completely useless; however, abandoning this reality, we now want to ask whether after the Prophet (S) .consultative meetings were held, and if so, whether the majority opinion was upheld

To answer and explain the question, we shall take a look first of all at some history and the circumstances of the Saqifah of the Bani Sa'adah according to reliable .historical documents

A Brief History of Saqifah

When the Prophet (S) closed his loving eyes to the world, the Ansars, the original Medinese, gathered in a building called the Saqifah of the Bani Sa'adah, and pronounced that after the Prophet, government and walayat belonged to Sa'ad ibn 'Ubadah. Sa'ad was ill, but was present in the

meeting, and after praising Allah he said: "O Ansar! there is no group better than you .in Islam

For the Prophet (S) was thirteen years among the Quraysh, and he called them to abandon idols and their worship for the One God; but, apart from a few individuals, they did not believe in him and his ideas and make his religion grow. So Allah restored

you to happiness put him and his religion in your hands, entrusted support for him and his religion to you. You have always been loyal to this agreement, till He chose to take ".him away. Now you should make every effort, for it is your special right

The Ansar said that he had spoken well, and that he should take the government and succession into his own hands. But some said: "What if the Quraysh want to dispute "?the matter with us

We shall tell them," said another group, "that they should choose a leader from" ".themselves, and we shall choose a leader from among us

.This would be the first blow to break Islam," said Sa'ad"

Umar was informed. He sent for Abu Bakr, who was in the house of the Prophet (S)' with 'Ali (a.s.), and who sent word that he was occupied. 'Umar sent another message, .in which the news was that his presence was indispensable

Abu Bakr left the presence of the beautiful body of the Prophet (S) which 'Ali was busy in preparing for the funeral. 'Umar said to him: "Do you not know that

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"?the Ansar are gathered in the Saqifah to choose Sa'ad for the Caliphate

So both of them hurried to the place. On the way they met Abu 'Ubaydah al- Jarrah, whom they took along with them. Then they reached the Sagifah, Abu Bakr raised up .to address the crowd

Praise be to Allah, and blessings on his Prophet. Allah sent the Prophet to man so that" they who worshipped many gods might worship the One God, they who suppose that their gods are healers that they are of benefit to them. And it was difficult for the Arabs to leave the religion of their fathers. Then Allah showed his preference for the Muhajrin (those Muslims from Mecca who migrated with the Prophet), and brought them faith in the religion of the Prophet (S). They bore the difficulties with this great man with forbearance, so they are more deserving after him in this matter. You, O

Ansar, say that after you no one is to be more preferred in the religion, so after the muhajirin, no one has a higher degree than you. So we are the rulers, and you are the ".ministers and the counsellors We win not do anything without consulting you

Habab ibn Mundhir stood up and said: "O Ansar, beware! Take the reins of government in your hands; for the people are under your protection, no one can quarrel with you. Do not fall out between yourselves, so that what you do is ruined. These people do not accept our

".authority, so we must have our own ruler, and they theirs

That can never be," said 'Umar. "The Arabs would never submit to your rule; they will" ".not yield, for the Prophet was not from you

Habab stood up again and said: "O Ansar! You must decide! Do not listen to this man and his friendliness. He wants to do completely away with your right. If they do not give up, you must throw them out of this town and take things over. I swear by Allah, ".you are the more deserving

.May Allah kill you!" said 'Umar"

.May He kill you!" said Habab"

.Abu 'Ubaydah stood up to come between them

O Ansar!" he cried, "you were the first group who gave support and believed, so you" ".must not be the first to go astray

Then Bashir ibn Sa'ad got up and said, "O Ansar, I swear by Allah that if we were the first in the jihad against the polytheists, and had priority in the religion, it was only ".because we wanted nothing but the will of Allah

Now!" cried Abu Bakr. "Do you wish to swear allegiance to both this 'Umar and this" "?Abu 'Ubaydah al-Jarrah

“No!” they shouted. “We swear by Allah that you are the most deserving of the Muhajirin, and we are not on a par with you; so give your hands that we can swear allegiance to you.”

Then, as 'Umar and Abu 'Ubaydah wanted, they swore allegiance to Abu Bakr. Bashir ibn Sa'ad, from the Ansar and the tribe of Aws, the

p: ۲۴۱

great Medma tribe, went before them and swore allegiance.

When the people of the tribe of Aws saw Bashir open the way and acknowledge the Quraysh to be more deserving than them, and the Khazraj, the other great tribe, wanted Sa'ad ibn 'Ibedah as their leader, they spoke among themselves.

“By Allah, if the Khazraj take the reins of power in their hands, they will always have preference. Let us rise up and swear allegiance to Abu Bakr.”

Then 'Umar seized Sa'ad ibn 'Ubadah by the collar and said to the people: “Kill him!”

And Sa'ad was ever more loyal to Abu Bakr.(۱)

Now You Judge

With the evidence that we shall present to you now, it will be seen that the story of Saqifah was not only a consultation among the Muslims, but that it was a plot to usurp the right to the Caliphate of Hazrat 'Ali (a.s.) may Allah bless him - and to put someone else in his place.

Firstly, while on his way to Saqifah, 'Umar sent word only to Abu Bakr and not to anyone else. And Abu Bakr who was in the house of the Prophet (S) with the great ones among the companions of the Prophet and with Hazrat 'Ali (a.s.), did not tell anyone, forgot the commotion over the tragedy of the death of the Prophet (S), left the corpse of that great man and hurried to Saqifah. If, truly, a plan had not been arranged, why did Abu Bakr not tell 'Umar that he had to tell

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Of course, there were many who did not swear allegiance to Abu Bakr the Bani - ۱ Hashim, Abbas and his sons Habab ibn Mundhir, Salman al-Farsi Abu Dharr, Miqdad, .('Ammar, Zubayr, etc. (See Fusul al-Muhimmah, vol. ۴, p. ۱۸۳۷

the Bani Hashim and the helpers of the Prophet, that at that time they should wait until the body of the Prophet was buried, and that afterwards they should proceed an ?together to the ascertaining of the successor to the Caliphate

Is consultation - shura' - like this, that three people should come among one of the tribes of the town, and, with the opinion of these people being controlled by one man, by sweet words and threats and other means deceive them and create differences between them then by compulsion and bad words stop progress to their advantage and not let these people's trusted leader know, and then to kill anyone who is against them and say that he wanted to cause a disturbance among the people against the interests of the world of Islam, and on that pretext call for his execution or ?banishment

In consultation over such a great and important matter, should not at least the great companions and the Bani Hashim in the forefront of whose ranks was Amir al-?'Mu'minin have been called

Secondly, Saqifah became like a football ground, involuntarily bringing shouts and .cheers from the people

After sweet words and self-advertisement, Abu Bakr said to the Ansar: “Swear ”.allegiance to whomever you want - 'Umar or Abu 'Ubadah

There was no place for questions. One of these two must be Khalifah, they who were following him. The Caliphate became like a ball, which they then passed to Abu Bakr ,and say, as long as you have it

?what more do you want

!And the Sunnis call this childish ball game the meeting and consultation of the people

.Thirdly, 'Umar made dear that no consultation had taken place

Some years after the proceedings of Saqifah, 'Umar said, at the time of his own Caliphate: “We have heard that one of you said that if 'Umar dies I shall swear allegiance to so-and-so. Someone said to him that the allegiance to Abu Bakr was .without consultation and without reckoning

It is true that allegiance to Abu Bakr took place all at once without much thought or“ reckoning, but Allah protected us from mischief. However no-one should give you the (example of Abu Bakr to follow.”(۱

If there really had been a question of a consultation, and the great ones of the companions of the Prophet (S) could have voted in freedom, allegiance to Abu Bakr would not have been “all at once without much thought or reckoning.” It would not in .this way have become famous; there would have been no mischief or danger in it

Fourthly, Umar said: “After the Prophet, 'Ali and Zubayr and their companions rose up (against us, and assembled in Fatimah's house.”(۲

We ask whether this clear opposition can be ignored, especially as it is acknowledged .by 'Umar

Fifthly, if the matter of the Caliphate must be resolved on the basis of consultation, the Prophet (S) would certainly before his death have explained, or at least implicated, the way it should be done. By the criterion of reason, would the Prophet

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Tabari, vol. ۴, p. ۱۸۲۰-۱۸۲۳ -۱

.Ibid -۲

explain some very abstruse command, but make no mention of such a great matter

?as this

?How was 'Ali's Right Usurped

point

In all societies there are some people who wish to seize the reins of government by .any possible means, and rule over the people

They continue in their aims until such time as they manage to lay their hands on what they covet, although they disregard the commands of Allah and the Prophet. Anyone who looks into the history of the Caliphate after the Prophet of Islam (a.s.) will be able .to find such people

Now, those who gathered in Saqifah and struck a blow against Islam were from this group. So let us once again look at the reality of what happened during the illness and .death of the Prophet

The Troops of Usamah .۱

In the last days of his life, on his sick bed, the Prophet (S) gave the command of the army to Usamah ibn Zayd who was a youth, but celebrated and worthy, to take the .army towards Mu'tah, at the eastern limits of the Roman Empire of that time

In his army there were both Muhajrin and Ansar, and in particular Abu Bakr, 'Umar, Abu 'Ubaydah al-Jarrah and others. The Prophet had laid much emphasis on the defence of this front, even though Usamah asked: "Please allow us to stay till Allah ".should favour you with recovery

".Leave this town," the Prophet commanded, "and move off in the name of Allah"

If I leave and dispatch the army and you are ill like this, I shall be anxious and ill"

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".at ease

".Move off to victory and success"

".I am not happy to tell the expedition about your health"

What I have commanded, do!" replied the Prophet, and fainted. When he recovered" he said: "May Allah curse those who leave the army of Usamah and desert from it."(1) But, in any case, Abu Bakr and 'Umar deserted from Usamah's troop, and resumed to .Medina

2. The Matter of the Pen and the Inkpot

In the last days of his life, on his sick bed, the Prophet (S) ordered that paper and ink be brought to him and he said that he wanted to write something down, so that the .Ummah should not be lost after his death

(But some of those present said: "He is speaking in delirium."(2

Ibn Abbas says that in the first years of 'Umar's Caliphate. He visited him 'Umar asked: ".“Does he ('Ali) still regard himself the Caliphate?" "Yes

Is he of the opinion that the Prophet made his Caliphate clear?" "Yes, and what is" ".more clear is that I asked my father about this matter and he said that 'Ali was right

The Prophet wanted to specify his name towards the end of his life when he was ill," (but I did not allow him to do so."(3

It is clear from this sentence who was the person who, at that moment, had unjustly .said that the Prophet was delirious

Now, can it be said that 'Umar knew better than the Prophet what was to the advantage of the Islamic nation, that he should not allow the Prophet (S) to specify the name

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1- Ibn Abi'l Hadid Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, (in 4 volumes), vol. 2, p. 21.

Tabari in vol. ۴, p. ۱۸۶. Sahih of Muslim in Kitab al-Wasiyyah relates this sentence to -۲ .'Umar

.Ibn Abil Hadid, Op. cit. vol. ۲, p. ۵۶۳ -۳

?(.of 'Ali (a.s

We can now bring this matter to an end by concluding that those who unjustly relied on plotting and deceit for the position of the Caliphate of the Prophet, were engaged in planning the seizure of the Caliphate from the time of the Prophet's death, if not .before, and that it was from power-seeking and status-seeking motives

This seeking of power motivated them to remove obstacles such as Sa'ad ibn 'Ubadah who was against the Caliphate of Abu Bakr and did not swear allegiance to him, whereupon he was killed. They said the 'Jinn' killed him! Or Malik ibn Nuwayrah, a man of faith who was such that the Prophet rightly said of him that if anyone wanted to see one of the people of heaven he should look at Malik's face. Since he had heard from the Prophet (S) that the Caliphate belonged to the Hazrat 'Ali (a.s.), when the Prophet died, and when he came to Medina and saw and heard that the Caliphate had been .unjustly usurped, hastened to oppose it

Khalid ibn Walid killed him and violated his honour. No punishment or penalty was .meted out to him by the Khalifah

Another evil work that was done in the way of consolidating this lust for power was .the usurpation of Fadak

Fadak was a district crowded with gardens and orchards and very fruitful. It was in the possession of the only daughter of the Prophet, Hazrat Fatimah - may Allah bless .her always

Abu Bakr seized it, and turned

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out Hazrat Fatimah's labourers out from it. Fatimah (a.s.) argued with Abu Bakr and

won, and he give her the deed of ownership to the land. But 'Umar took that title-deed and tore it up without any reprimand from Abu Bakr(۱), hut this is matter to he treated .separately, for Abu Bakr never replaced it with another document

Thus, from what has been said, there can be no doubt that these were men with a lust for power, self-seekers, lovers of the world, who stooped at nothing to achieve their .aims

Questions

?Why do Muslims believe that the holy Prophet is without sin and error .۱

?Why are actions of the holy Prophet as God wills .۲

?What does verse ۶ ch. ۳۳ say .۳

?What does verse ۳۶ ch. ۳۳ say .۴

?What does the explanation of verse ۳۶ ch. ۳۳ prove .۵

?What does verse ۶۵ ch. ۴ say .۶

?Is the holy Prophet subject to the opinions of the majority, if not why .۷

?What dose verse ۱۵۹ ch. ۳ say .۸

?What kind of evidence dose this verse provides .۹

What results does the author obtain from consultation mentioned in verse ۱۵۹ ch. .۱۰ ?۳

?Does the peace treaty with Quraysh agree with the opinions of the majority .۱۱

If that peace treaty does not agree with the opinions of the majority then what is .۱۲ ?the meaning of consultation

?Did consultation take place after the death of the holy Prophet .۱۳

On what grounds the decisions of the holy Prophet are above other's opinions .۱۴ ?including that of the majority

Why .۱۵

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.Sirah al-Halabiyyah, vol. ۳, p. ۴۰۰ -۱

?did Sa'd consider the Ansar as true supporters of Islam

?What right did Sa'd think the Ansars had .۱۶

What was the opinion of some others in case of dispute between Ansar and .۱۷ ?Quraysh

?Why did 'Umar urge Aba Bakr to join him and where did they go .۱۸

?What did Abu Bakr say in his speech .۱۹

?What reason did Abu Bakr provide in support of his group's rightfulness to Khilafat .۲۰

?What did Habab Ibn Mundhir say in response to Abi Bakr .۲۱

?What did 'Umar say in response to Habab .۲۲

?What did Habab say again .۲۳

?What did each of them say .۲۴

?What did Abu 'Ubaydah say .۲۵

?What did Bashir Ibn Sa'd say .۲۶

?What die Abu Bakr say and propose .۲۷

What did 'Umar and Abu 'Ubaydah al-Jarrah say in response to Abi Bakr and what .۲۸ ?else did they do

?Who was the third person to support Abu Bakr .۲۹

?Why is the outcome of the gathering at Saqifah not valid .۳۰

?Who else should have been included in the gathering at Saqifah .۳۱

?Who considers the happening at Saqifah as consulting .۳۲

?Did ‘Umar for his becoming successor to Abu Bakr follow the idea of consultation .۳۳

????..... What is the implications of the statement of .۳۴

What is the legal effects of the gathering at the house of Sayyidah Fatimah . ۳۵ ?according to ‘Umar

?What does item ۵th of the text suggest .۳۶

?How was Imam Ali’s rights usurped .۳۷

?What kind of people is called power seekers .۳۸

?What kind of instructions did the Prophet give to Usamah and his troops .۳۹

.۴۰

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?Who were ordered to join these troops

What did the Prophet say about those who would not join the troops of Usama and .۴۱ ?ignore this order

?What are the facts of ink and paper .۴۲

Could the Prophet write the instructions that he wanted to write for the guidance of .۴۳ ?the Muslim and why not

?What are the fact in the conversation between ‘Umar and ibn Abbass .۴۴

?Who spoil the chance of the holy Prophet for writing instructions for the Muslims .۴۵

.What did Imam Ali believe about Khilafat .۴۶

Was the establishment of Khilafat based on instructions of Qur'an and those of the .۴۷ ?Prophet or due to the zeal for power and position

?What did Khalid Ibn Walid do .۴۸

.'What happened to the garden of palm trees that belong to Fatimah Zahra .۴۹

(.Lesson ۲۸: The Twelfth Imam, Muhammad al-Mahdi (a.j

point

Imam Mahdi (a.j.) was born on ۱۵th of the month of Sha'ban in the year ۲۵۵ A.H. in the town of Samarra, and in ۲۶۰ A.H., when his great father died, he assumed the exalted position of the Imamat. His name (Muhammad) and his agnomen epithet (Abul-Qasim) are the same as those for the holy Prophet (S). His father, the ۱۱th Imam, was Imam Hasan al-'Askari (a.s.), and his mother was the great lady Nargis may the peace .of Allah be with her

For various reasons, the twelfth Imam, from the first day of his life, did not appear in public. For about seventy years people were in communication with him through his special representatives, whose names are as follows

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in order of succession: 'Uthman Ibn Sa'id, Muhammad Ibn 'Uthman, Husayn Ibn Ruh, and 'Ali Ibn Muhammad al-Sammam. This period of seventy years is known as the minor occultation (al-Ghaybat al-Sughra'), after which the major occultation (al-Ghaybat al-Kubra') began.

During the major occultation and until the time of his re-appearance, no one has been and will be his special representative. The people have the duty to refer in the matters of the Islamic laws to the Fuqaha, those excelling in knowledge of the Shari'ah and

.the narration of Hadith who are specialists in such matters

Belief in Imam Mahdi (a.j.) and Universal Reform

The belief in the re-appearance of Imam Mahdi (a.j.) the universal reformer is not confined to the Shi'ah Muslims. Other Muslim groups and even non-Muslim groups like the Jews and the Christians and some of the great world intellectual figures believe in :the appearance of a great spiritual reformer. The following passage is from Psalm ۳۷

.Trust in the Lord and do good; so you will dwell in the land, and enjoy security..."

For the wicked shall be cut off: but those who wait for the Lord shall possess the... .Land

.But the weak shall possess the land, and delight themselves in abundant prosperity...

.The Lord knows the days of the flawless, and their heritage will abide forever...

For those blessed by the Lord, shall possess the land, but those cursed by Him shall.... .be cut off

"...The righteous shall possess the land, and dwell upon it forever...

(.The Holy Qur'an and belief In al-Mahdi (a.j

In the Qur'an a time is promised when the worshippers of Truth, the world's people

p: ۲۵۱

of righteousness, will take over the power and government of the world, and the glorious Din, religion, Islam will reign all over the earth. Other verses have been .(.revealed, which with proper exegesis point to Imam Mahdi (a.j

We have written it in the psalms, which We had revealed after the Torah that the " .(earth will be given to Our righteous servants as their inheritance (۲۱:۱۰۵

God has promised the righteously striving believers to appoint them as His deputies

on earth, as He had appointed those who lived before. He will make the religion that He has chosen for them to stand supreme. He will replace their fear with peace and security so that they will worship God alone and consider no one equal to Him. .(Whoever becomes an unbeliever after this will be a sinful person. (۲۴:۵۵

It is He who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the true religion to stand .(supreme over all religions, even though the pagans dislike it (۶۱:۹

But We have decided to grant a favour to the suppressed ones by appointing them ".(leaders and heirs of the land, (۲۸:۵

The above verses clearly show that in the end the world will come into the hands of Allah's worthy and righteous servants and that they will become the leaders of the .people of the world. Then all people will accept Islam instead of all religions

Belief in al–Mahdi (a.j.) and the Sunni Authorities

In this subject, the scholars in the Sunni school have related many Hadith from the .Prophet of Islam, through narrators who they themselves trust

p: ۲۵۲

From among them are such Hadith expressing that the Imams are twelve persons .and that they are all from the Quraysh

Al-Mahdi, the promised one, is from the family of the Prophet (a.s) and is a descendant of Imam 'Ali and Sayyidah Fatimah al-Zahra (a.s.), and in many of these Ahadith, (plural for Hadith), it is mentioned that he is from the line of Imam Husayn (a.s.). They have mentioned and recorded hundreds of Hadith about al- Mahdi in more than seventy books by their own valued and dependable authorities of which the .following are a few examples

- (.Al-Musnad of Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (d. ۲۴۱ A.H
- (.Sahih Bukhiri (d. ۲۵۶ A.H

- (.Sahih Muslim Ibn Hajjaj Nishapouri (d. ۲۶۱ A.H
- (.Sunan of Abi Dawud Sajistani (d. ۲۷۵ A.H
- (.Sahih Muhammad Ibn 'Isa al-Tirmidhi (d. ۲۷۹ A.H

The authors of the above books, each one of them are among the most authoritative books of the Sunni Muslims died either before the birth of the Imam of the Age (۲۵۵ .A.H.) or shortly after his birth

:Also of the works that mention Imam al-Mahdi are the following

- (.Musabih al-Sunnah of al-Baghawi (d. ۵۱۶ A.H
- (.Jami' al-'Usul of Ibn Athir (d. ۶۰۶ A.H
- (.Al-Futahat al-Makkiyyah of Muhyiddin Ibn al-'Arabi (d. ۶۳۸ A H
- (.Tadhkira al-Khawas of Sibt Ibn al-Jawzi (d. ۶۵۴ A.H
- (.Fara'id al-Simtayn of al-Hamawi (d.۷۱۶ A.H
- (.Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah of Ibn Hajar al-Haythami (d. ۹۷۳ A.H
- .(Yanabi' al-Mawaddah of Shaykh Sulayinan al-Qunduzi (d.۱۲۹۳

Some of the Sunni scholars have written books especially about the Imam of the

:Age

.Al-Bayan fi Akhbar Sahib al-Zaman of al-Ganji al-Shafi'i .۱

Al-'Iqd al-Durar fi Akhbar al-Imam al-Muntazar of Shaykh Jamaluddin Yusuf al- .۲ .Damishqi

Mahdi of ale-Rasul of 'Ali Ibn Sultan Muhammad al-Harawi al-Hanafi .۳

.Kitab al-Mahdi of Abu Dawud .۴

Alamat al-Mahdi of Jalaluddin al-Suyuti' .۵

Manaqib al-Mahdi of Hafiz Abu Na'im al-Isfahani .۶

Al-Qawl al-Mukhtasar fi 'Alamat al-Mahdi al-Muntazar of Ibn Hajar .۷

Al-Burhan fi 'Alamat al-Mahdi Akhir al-Zaman of Mulla 'Ali al-Muttaqi .۸

.Arba'un Hadith fi al-Mahdi of Abul 'Ala' al-Hamadani .۹

The Hidden Reformer

There are three hundred Ahadith from the Prophet (S) and from the five Imams about the Imam of the Age. From them it is clear that the Imam of the Age is the ninth son of Husayn Ibn Ali. His father is Imam Hasan al-'Askari (a.s.), his mother Nargis Khatun. His name is the same as that of the Prophet (S) of the end of time; he is also called al-Mahdi. He was born during his father's lifetime; in Samarra, Iraq, that his father died when he was young, that he lives even to this day, and as long as God wishes it. Then he will reappear and the world will be filled with justice after a time of injustice .everywhere and that why is he now hidden from the sight of men

And when he comes, may his appearance be come soon, with his back towards the Ka'bah's edifice, he will lean against the wall and call out loud for his supporters and followers, who will number ۳۱۳ persons. Prophet 'Isa (a.s.) will come from the heaven

down to the earth, and will pray in a prayer led by al-Mahdi. The Imam of the Age will cause the commands of Islam to reach all over the world, and the earth will become .like heaven

There are many Hadith related by the Shi'ah and Sunni scholars on many aspects pertaining this great Imam (a.s.), and these are mentioned in books like Behar al-Anwar and Muntakhab al-Athar.

The following are some of the Hadith, which the authors of Muntakhab al-Athar have .mentioned

Subject

No. of Hadith

۱. A Hadith in which it is said that the Imams (a.s) are twelve, the first being Imam Ali (.and the last Imam al-Mahdi (a.j

۵۸

۲. A Hadith, which gives news of the appearance of al-Mahdi (a.j.(.

۶۵۷

۳. A Hadith, which identifies him as being from the descendants of the Prophet (S.(

۳۸۹

۴. A Hadith, which says that his name and agnomen are the same as those for the holy .(Prophet (S

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۵. A Hadith which says al-Mahdi (a.j.) is a descendant of Amir al-Mu'minin.

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۶. A Hadith, which says he is a descendant of Sayyidah Fatimah (a.s (.

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۷. A Hadith, which says he is a descendant of Imam Husayn (a.s (.

۱۷۵

۸. A Hadith, which says he is the ninth descendant of Imam Husayn (a.s (.

۱۴۷

A Hadith, which says that he will fill the world with justice .۱۸

۱۲۳

A Hadith which says his occultation will be prolonged .۱۹

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A Hadith, which speaks of the extent of al-Mahdi's life .۲۰

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.A Hadith, which says that Islam will rule over the world through him .۲۱

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.A Hadith, which says he will be the twelfth and the last Imam .۲۲

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When looking at the above mentioned and other Ahadith, it should be kept in mind that the Hadith mentioning al-Mahdi (a.j.) have been narrated most frequently, and that there are few subjects in Islam which have been mentioned in Hadith so often. Thus, in this light, belief in Islam and the Holy Prophet (S) must necessarily follow with .belief in the existence of the promised Mahdi who is now in occultation

.The following are some text of these Ahadith

The author of Yanabi' al-Muwaddah reports that the Prophet (S) said, "al- Mahdi is a .۱ descendant of mine. He will be in concealment, and when he manifests himself, the ".earth will become filled with justice, just as it was previously filled with injustice

In this book it is also reported that Salman .۲

al-Farsi said, “I went to the Prophet, while Husayn Ibn 'Ali was sitting in his lap. The Prophet (S) was kissing his eyes and mouth saying, “You are a noble one, the son of a noble one, and the brother of a noble one. You are the Imam, the son of the Imam, and the brother of the Imam. You are the Authority, son of the Authority and the brother of the Authority. You will be the father of nine (divine) Authorities of whom the ninth will be the Qa’im, one of the names of Imam al-Mahdi (a.j).”

۳. Ibn Abi Dalaf says: “I heard from Imam Ali Ibn Muhammad (the ۱۰th Imam) who said, “The Imam after me will be Hasan, my son, and after him his descendant the Qa'im, who will fill the earth with justice, when it was previously filled with injustice.”

۴. Hudhayfah said that the Prophet (S) said, “If no more than one day is left of the world, God will make that day long enough to a man, descendant of mine, whose name is my name, to appear in the world.” Salman asked: “O Prophet of Allah, which descendant will he be?” The Prophet placed his hand on Husayn and said that he will be one of his descendants.

۵. Mas'adah reports from Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) who said, “The Qa’im will be born to Hasan (the eleventh Imam, Imam Hasan al-'Askari). Hasan will be the son of Ali (the tenth Imam, Imam Ali al-Naqi). Ali will be

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the son of Muhammad (the ninth Imam, Imam Muhammad al-Taqi). Muhammad will be born to Ali (the eighth Imam, Imam Ali Ibn Musa al-Rida). Ali will be the son of this child (he pointed to Imam Musa Ibn Ja'far, the seventh Imam). We are twelve Imams, all-pure and of noble birth. I swear by Allah, if there remains of the world no more than one day, Allah will make that day long enough so that the Qa'im of us, the Ahlul Bayt of the Prophet (S), will appear.”

The Opinion of Sociologists

The world's foremost intellectuals are of the opinion that the wars, massacres, murders, irresponsible sexual behaviours, and all the evils of this age which are daily in the increase are because there is no equilibrium between man's material and

.spiritual requirements

The man of today has turned his back on moral virtues and spiritual riches, although .he has conquered the sea, the desert and space, and has taken himself to the moon

It is obvious that by relying on force and power he cannot establish order and justice in the world, and that only with technology and the material sciences the happiness of humanity will not be secured. Man has no other resort than to strengthen his social relations on the basis of faith and virtue, and to save himself from the vortex of dangers with the guidance of a great world reformer, to establish a rule based on justice together with peace, security and sincerity. In this state of affairs, human society is moving

.(.quickly towards preparation for the rising up of the Imam of the Age (a.j

The Length of al-Mahdi's Life

We believe that the lengthening of a man's life is not an impossibility, because it is :explicitly said in the holy Qur'an that

We sent Nuh to his people, as he tarried among them a thousand years, all but fifty."" ((٢٩:١۴

What is more, research undertaken in the biological sciences has corroborated the possibility of lengthening the human life span. Even great scientists are of the opinion .that food and drugs may be prepared which can prolong man's life

The late Ayatullah As-Sadr(١) in his book "al-Mahdi", quoted from a scientific article written in ١٩۵٩, which stands as a witness to the above matter. Here is a summary of .what scientists say

Authoritative scientists say that all the basic tissues of the animal body can live" forever, and it is possible for man to live for a thousand years, provided that it doesn't happen that the thread of his life is not severed. These scientists do not speak on the

basis of guesswork or surmise, for they have arrived at their conclusion through .scientific experiment

A professor at Johns Hopkins University has said that it has been proved that the" basic members of the human body have the potentiality for eternal life. Apparently the first person to carry out these experiments on parts of an animal's body was Dr. Jack Lubb, and after him Dr. Warren Lewis, who, together with his wife, proved that parts of bird fetuses could be kept alive

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Muhammad Baqir as-Sadr, a learned scholar of Qum (۱۸۸۲-۱۹۵۳), father of the well- -۱ known Sayyid Musa Sadr of Lebanon

.it buffer solutions

These experiments were systematically continued until Dr. Alexis Karel, as a result of further experimental work established that parts of animals subjected to experiments did not degenerate, and even that they lived longer than the animal from which they had been taken. In January ۱۹۱۲ he started his experiments and by dint of self-sacrifice and removing the numerous difficulties, he discovered the following facts:

Unless complications such as lack of nutrition or attack by microbes intervened, .۱" living cells would continue living forever:

.These cells, which continued to live, also grew and multiplied

The growth and division of these cells could be controlled by the nutrition given to .۲ .them

The passing of time did not affect them and did not make them age or lose strength. .۳ Not even the smallest effect of aging, was seen. Each year they grew and multiplied exactly as in previous years. So why does man die? Why is his span of life rarer more ?than a hundred years

The part of the human or animals body are numerous and various, and there is also a perfect relationship and unity between them; so that the life of some of then depends on the life of others, and the failure or death of parts of human or animal bodies is the consequence of the death of the other parts. Sudden deaths, which are the result of infection, are for this reason, and it also provides the reason for the average limit of man's life being: around seventy

.to eighty years

Of course, what experiments have shown is that the cause of death is not the arrival at seventy or eighty years of age, but that the fundamental causes are diseases and accidents which may attack one of the body's organs and put it out of work; then the death of this part causes a break in its relation to other parts and the death of other .organs ensues

Thus if science could eliminate accidents or obstruct their harmful effects, there .would be no impediment to the prolongation of life

So if we know that a greatly extended life is not an impossibility, there is no hindrance to prevent God, the All-powerful, from keeping a man safe and sound for thousands of years, because the regulations of a man's life is in the hands of God. He can bring a new harmony into existence, which has preference over the usual order of things, just .as He did in the case of all the miracles

The miracles of the prophets, the cooling of the fire for Ibrahim al-Khalil, the turning into a serpent of Prophet Musa's (Moses) staff, the bringing to life of the dead through Prophet 'Isa, (Jesus) and so forth, are all against the usual flow of things, but Cod brought another order into existence by His own power and a miracle occurred. All .Muslims, Jews and Christians, believe in these miracles

Similarly for the length of the life of the Imam of the Age (a.j.) there remains no place

for any kind of objection, because if someone says that such a length of life is impossible, his claim cannot be at all accepted after that the Qur'an has spoken concerning the length of Prophet Nuh's life, and also after the latest revelations of .biology

If it is said that it is possible, but against the normal natural order of things, it can be answered that the length of life of the Imam of the Age (a.j.) is against the natural order just as the miracles of the prophets, and is carried out according to the will of God. Someone who believes in the power of God and the occurrence of the miracles .of the prophets cannot have the slightest objection to the length of the Imam's life

(.The Occultation of the Imam of the Age (a.j

The Prophet of Islam (S) sometimes gave people a hint concerning the occultation of the twelfth Imam, and the infallible Imams (a.s.) also reminded people of this matter, the news of the occultation of the Imam of the Age (a.j.) was so well known even before his birth, that everyone who believed in the birth of the Imam also believed in his prolonged occultation. The following indications have come down to us from many .Ahadith on this subject

The Prophet said, "The Qa'im of my descendants will disappear from public sight, as .١ the result of a covenant between I and him, and then people will say that Allah has no need of the family of Muhammad and some will doubt his birth. So

everyone who is aware of his time must act according to his religion, and must not let ".Shaytan enter him by faltering lest he be thrown out of my people and my religion

Amir al-Mu'minin said, "Our Qa'im has an occultation which will be of great .٢ duration... Beware! Everyone who is firm in his religion, and does not become hard hearted from the lengthening of the occultation of this man (and turn away from his ".religion) will find himself in the same rank as I on the Day of Resurrection

Then he said, "Our Qa'im, when he rises, has no responsibility for anyone's allegiance

".to him, and for this reason his birth will be secret and he will be hidden

Muhammad Ibn Muslim said that he heard from Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (a.s.) saying, .۳ ".“If you hear of the occultation of your Imam, do not deny it

Al-Tabarsi has written this, “The Ahadith of the occultation were recorded by the .۴ Shi'ite narrators in books which were composed in the time of Imam al-Baqir and Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.). Of all these reliable narrators one was Hasan Ibn. About a hundred years before the time of the occultation, he wrote a book called “al-Mashiykhah., and mentioned the Ahadith about the occultation in it. The following is .one of them

Abu Basir has said, “I said in the presence of Imam al-Sadiq (a s.) that Imam abu-“ Ja'far had said, 'The Qa'im of the family of Muhammad (S) will have two occultation; one prolonged, one

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short.' He said, “Yes, O abu-Basir, one of those occultation will be longer than the ".other

The Prophet of Islam (S) and the infallible Imams (a.s.) reminded people that the report of the occultation of the Imam of the Age (a.s.) became public with the announcement of the existence of the Prophet himself. Belief in the Imam's (occultation is not separate from belief in the existence of the holy Prophet (S

Shaykh Saduq has narrated from al-Sayyid al-Himyari, “I had some exaggerated idea about Muhammad Ibn al-Hanafiyyah, and believed that he was hidden, till Allah enlightened me through Imam al-Sadiq (a.s) and saved me from the Fire. I was guided to the true way, whereby after the Imamate of Ja'far Ibn Muhammad had been proved to me with solid evidence and reason, I said one day to him, “O son of the Prophet of Allah, tell me some Hadith from your forefathers about occultation and the truth of it. If you please, I would appreciate if you tell me for whom the occultation is.” He replied, 'The occultation will occur for my descendant in the sixth generation, and

he will be the twelfth Imam after the Prophet of Allah, the first one being 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib, and the last the Qa'im, the one who will stand for the Truth, the remaining of the ”...reminders of Allah on earth and the Imam of the Age

?Why is the Imam of the Age out of the Public sight

In previous lessons it was said that the existence of the Imam (a.j.) and the successor of the

Prophet (S) was necessary for a number of reasons, such as settling differences, explaining the laws of Allah, and giving spiritual, inward guidance, and that Allah, the Merciful, appointed Amir al-Mu'minin (a.s.) Ali Ibn Abu Talib and after him eleven people from his descendants, one after the other, as Imams after the Prophet of .(Islam (S

It is obvious that the duties of the Imam of the Age, in all the aspects of the Imamate, leadership, are the same as that of his predecessors. If there were no hindrance, it would be necessary that he be clearly in public sight, so that people would prosper in ?all the benefits of his existence. So why was he went out of public sight at all

Basically, there is no need to look for the philosophy or reasons behind his occultation so as to believe in the rule of Allah, for there is no obligation on one to know the basic reason for it, just as we remain ignorant of the metaphysical reasons behind many other things. It is sufficient that we know on the basis of the many Hadith and true proofs that God, the Almighty, sent his own Proof, but that, for various reasons, He .kept him out of public sight

It can also be found out from some Hadith that the basic and fundamental reason for the occultation will become known after the appearance of al-Mahd. 'Abdullah al-Fadl al-Hashimi says, “I heard Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (a.s.) saying, “The occultation (of the (۱۲th Imam

will be indispensable, so that the people of vanity will fall into doubts about him." I asked, "Why is it so?" He said, "For a reason which I am not at liberty to declare." I asked, "What will his role be?" He replied, "The same role as existed in the occultation of previous divine authorities. It will not be disclosed until after his appearance, just as the role of the works of Khidr was not known (meaning the drilling of a hole in the boat, the killing of the youth, the repairing of the wall in the story of Khidr in the Qur'an) until Musa and Khidr decided to part company." O Fadl, the subject of the occultation is a command of Allah and a secret of His secrets, and since we acknowledge Allah, we must say that that His acts are done with Knowledge and ".Wisdom, even if the reason for them is not known to us

Of course the benefits of al-Mahdi's occultation can be discovered, and these have .been indicated in some of the Ahadith

A test for people is one of the benefits of the occultation of the Imam of the Age. On .١ one side, the inner failings of the group without faith become evident. On the other side, those in the depths of whose hearts faith have taken root, their hope of deliverance, their patience in adversity, their faith in the unseen become more .perfect, their worthiness become known

Imam Musa Ibn Ja'far (a.s.) has said, "When

my fifth descendant will go out of the [public sight, persevere in your religion, so that no one may turn you away from it. There will be an occultation for the Imam of that Age, when a group of believers in him will relinquish their belief. This occultation is a ".test with which Allah will test His slaves

A Protection for the Imam against being murdered. From a study of the leaders of .۲ Islam, and their situation i.e. the Umayyide and Abbaside Caliphs, it can clearly be seen that if the twelfth Imam would remain in public sight they would surely kill him like his forefathers or poison him. When they heard and knew that there will arise from the family of the Prophet, and from the descendants of 'Ali and Fatimah (a.s)

someone who would destroy the government of the oppressors, and that that person would be a child of Imam Hasan al- 'Askari (a.s.), they, the Abasside planned to kill .him. But Allah protected him and his enemies lost hope

Zurarah reports from Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) that he said, “There will be an occultation prior to the appearance of the Qa'im.” Zurarah asked, “Why will it be there?” He replied, “So that he may escape murder, and that occultation will continue till the ”.ground for his appearance and triumph over the rule of the oppressors is ready

۳. The third benefit that can be gleaned from the Hadith is that by this means al-Mahdi will be saved from the allegiance

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to him of the oppressors, Caliphs, and usurping rulers. When he appears no one will swear allegiance to him, he can freely expose the truth and establish a just and .righteous rule

(.The Benefits of the Existence of the Hidden Imam (a.j

God appointed the Imam of the Age (a.j.) to be a guide for people. However, it is the people who are the obstacle to his appearance. Whenever they are ready for a single, Divine rule worldwide, formed on true justice and observance of all rights, truth and the practice of all the laws of Islam without any dissimulation or fear, al- Mahdi (a.j.) .will openly declare himself

So, with regard to Allah, the Merciful, there is not even the slightest lack of favour or mercy. The fault lies with the people that the Imam is out of public sight and the appearance of his rule is delayed. Still, it must be remembered that the benefits of the existence of the Imam are not limited to outward guidance among people. Just the existence of the Imam has other benefits, which are not necessarily evident among .people

The most important benefit of the Imam's existence is that he is the intermediary for Divine favour. On the basis of the evidence the scholars have produced and also

according to numerous Hadith which speak of the Imamat, leadership, if there were no Imam the relation between the world and its Creator would no longer exist. All of the favors of Allah come through the Imam to the rest of humanity. In many Hadith it

.is said very clearly that the earth will not remain without an Imam

The Imam is the heart of the world of existence, the leader, the preceptor of mankind, and for this reason his presence or his absence makes no difference. What is more, the spiritual guidance of the Imam towards worthy individuals will always be there, although they may not see him, especially as it is mentioned in Hadith that the Mahdi (a.j.) comes and goes among the people in the meetings of the believers without anyone understanding. Thus the guarding of Islam and the protection of the worthy is well undertaken by the Imam, even during the time of his occultation. In reality the hidden Imam is like the sun behind a cloud from whose light and heat existent things .may profit, although the ignorant and the blind may not see it

Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) also said in answer to the question: "How can people benefit from ".a hidden Imam?" He replied, "Just as they do from the sun when it is behind a cloud

The following is an excerpt from the writings of Henri Corbin the famous French scholar, "I believe that the Shi'ah sect is the only religion which maintains eternally the link of Divine guidance between God and his creation, and continually keeps alive the .union of walayat

The Jewish religion, finished prophethood, which is the relationship between God and the world of man, with Moses, and do not acknowledge the prophethood, of Jesus or Muhammad. Thus they

have served this link. The Christians, also, stopped with Jesus, and the Sunni Muslims stood still with Muhammad. With the seal of prophethood among the latter, they .admit of no further link being maintained between the Creator and creation

Only the Shi'ah faith believes that the prophethood ended with Muhammad, but that" walayat, which is this link of guidance and progression, continues to live after him and .forever

Indeed, only among the Shi'ah does this reality between the world of man and the" ".Divinity remain forever

Belief in the Imam of the Age means that the link between people and the unseen world is inseparable. If someone believes this, he must always remember the Mahdi .and await the appearance of this hidden reformer

Waiting for the Imam of the Age does not mean that all Muslims and Shi'ah should fold their arms and take no steps and measures in the way of furthering the aims of Islam but only wish him to appear. The great Shi'ah scholars have been saying from the earliest times that a Muslims and a Shi'ah has the duty to make every effort to establish and strengthen the Islamic system of education and laws in the face of .injustice and evil

In other words, to strive prepare for a just rule and harmonize the society that justice is served to the suffering. Oppression and cruelty are condemned. Every Muslim has the duty to offer some in the way of Imam and Islam, and to always be prepared to welcome the

promised al-Mahdi (a.j.). One must so order his life that it may be not contradict the project of the Imam, and that he may take his piece in the ranks in support of the .Imam and fight against the enemies

Questions

۱. ?Where and when was Imam Mehdi born

۲. ?Who were his father and mother

۳. For how long did this Imam communicate with these people and through how many

?people

?What is the duty of the people in the absence of the Imam .۴

?Who else besides the Shia Muslims believe in universal reform .۵

?What does psalm ۳۷ say .۶

?What does verse ۱۰۸ ch. ۲۱ say .۷

?What does verse ۵۵ ch. ۲۴ say .۸

?What does verse ۹ ch. ۶۱ say .۹

?What does verse ۵ ch. ۲۸ say .۱۰

?What do these verses establish .۱۱

?a) How many Imams according to Sunni Muslim Hadith are after the Holy Prophet .۱۲

?b) To whose family does Imam Mahdi belong

c) How many books, Hadith, and by how many Sunni Muslim scholars have been ?reported about Imam Mehdi

According to the text, how many Sunni scholars have written books about Imam .۱۳ ?Mehdi

How many Hadith about Imam Mehdi do we have from the Holy Prophet and the .۱۴ ?five Imams and what do they (Hadith) prove

?How many people will be of his special helpers .۱۵

?How many Hadith are mentioned in the text from Muntakhab al-Athar .۱۶

Why should people believing in Islam and the Holy Prophet believe in Imam Mehdi .۱۷ ?also

?What do the Hadith ۱-۵ mentioned in the text say .۱۸

What .۱۹

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?do the sociologists say about the social events

?What does verse ۱۴ ch. ۲۹ say .۲۰

?Can life be prolonged according to science .۲۱

?What has Ayatullah Sadr said about a long life .۲۲

?What has Dr. Alexis Karel said about a longer life .۲۳

?Can science eliminate accidents .۲۴

?Can God give long life to someone .۲۵

?What did God do in case of fire and Prophet Abraham .۲۶

?How can Imam Mehdi live for so long .۲۷

?What has the Prophet said about the occultation of Imam Mehdi .۲۸

?What has Imam Ali said about the occultation of Imam Mehdi .۲۹

?What has Muhammad Ibn Muslim said about the occultation of Imam Mehdi .۳۰

? .۳۱

?What has Shaikh Saddiq narrated from Humyory .۳۲

?For what do the people need the Imams .۳۳

?When will the reason for the occultation of the Imam be made public .۳۴

?Why are such reasons not made public now .۳۵

?What are the benefits of Imam Mehdi's occultation according to Hadith ۱-۳ .۳۶

?In what kinds of conditions will Imam Mehdi appear in public .۳۷

? .۳۸

What does the Hadith of Imam as-Sadiq say about the benefits of the existence of .۳۹ ?Imam Mehdi

?What has Henri Corbin said about the Shia Muslims .۴۰

?What is the meaning of the belief in the Imam of the age .۴۱

?What is the duty of the Muslims during the absence of Imam Mehdi .۴۲

Lesson۲۹: The Return

point

You have been created for eternity; you are merely being moved from one home to" (another." The Prophet of Islam (S

All divinely revealed religions have specified that man is not destroyed

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by death but only goes from this world to another world and in that world will receive .the due reward for his deeds, good or bad

All divine prophets and their followers have mentioned this point, that the amazing harmony and order of the universe is not in vain, and that after the removal from this world, all the actions that were done here will be investigated, so we should prepare :ourselves for such a sure and certain future and always say

Our Lord, Thou hast not created this for vanity. Glory be to Thee! Guard us against" (the chastisement of the Fire." (۳:۱۹۱

Now let us look at some of the clear proofs of the Return

The Wisdom and Justice of Allah .١

The matter of the Return, which all religions specify and about which God's prophets have warned people with all insistence, is not just something to be accepted blindly, for the intellect acknowledges it to be sure and certain on the basis of the wisdom, .justice and mercy of Allah

God's wisdom requires that those who do good should not be left without reward, and that those who do evil should not be left without punishment, and that the oppressed be delivered from their oppression. We can see that this world is not a place of complete reward and punishment, and that man good-doers and evil- doers die before they receive a complete, just reward for the deeds. Evil-doers, with all their crimes and wrongs, benefit from the resources of life, and the oppressed are not delivered from their

.oppression

Thus, if the records of these people were to terminate right here, and there is no Return and Resurrection, what would have happened to God's infinite justice, wisdom ?and mercy

How can it be said that the Just, Wise and Merciful Creator brought a world into existence where important people are troubled with oppression and injustice, and ?after a while become nothing

We all know that this would be nothing less than injustice. The insignificant justice and wisdom of man, even, is not compatible with such works, so how is it possible that an All-wise Cod should be like that? How is it possible that a God Who had no need to create us, aml Whose aim in creating us was only to train us and make our existence productive, could be satisfied merely with this present world? How could He cut the root of man's existence before he became aware and reached fruition and annihilate ?him

Without doubt, God will give complete reward and punishment for all deeds and .behaviour in another world, and will neglect nothing

Or do those who commit evil deeds think that We shall make them as those who" believe and do righteous deeds, equal their living and their dying? How ill they judge! Allah' created the heavens and the earth in truth, and that every soul may be (recompensed for what it has earned; they shall not be wronged." (۴۵: ۲۱-۲۲

Also, in this limited world it is impossible to punish some deeds and woks. For example, someone who

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drops an atom bomb and blows millions of people into blood and dust. His death, in the face of the death of millions of people, cannot be called punishment, and his۰ .complete reward will come in the next world which is an eternal world

Similarly, the life of this world, mixed with difficulties and discomforts, is too small for Cod to reward the doers of good there, the people who have devoted themselves throughout their lives to service to God and to good towards other creatures, or who .have saved countless numbers of souls from certain death

Retribution

We have seen and heard with our own eyes and ears in this world how many people have, for example, dealt unjustly with their mothers and fathers, but have had no triumph in their lives, or who have killed their parents and died themselves young. We have also seen how many people have been kind to the mothers and fathers, and have received their reward in this world and lived successful lives; and again how many people have not observed the rights of orphans, and have seen the ominous .fruits of their work in this world

The Qur'an has threatened people with the consequences of injustice towards :orphans and has said

And let those fear (from hurting orphans) who, if they left behind them weak seed," (would be afraid on their account, and let them fear Allah." (۴: ۹

Imam Baqir (a.s.) said: "Allah has allotted two punishments for consuming the property of orphans, a torment in this

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".world and a retribution in the next

Sometimes the afflictions and blights from which a man suffers are the result of bad deeds which originate from him, and truly retribution will come in this world till that person becomes aware of what he is doing and ceases from it. In many ayahs, the .Qur'an explains this matter

(Whatever affliction visits you is for what your own hands have earned." (۴۲:۳۰"

So let those who go against His command beware, lest a trial befall them, or there" (befall them a painful chastisement." (۲۴:۶۳

(Allah changes not what is in a people, until they change what is in themselves." (۱۳: ۱۱"

Some tribes and peoples who rebelled against the prophets of God sometimes saw the worldly punishment for their deeds in the world itself. The Qur'an narrates the tortues of the people of Nuh, the people of Hud, the people of Salih, the people of Lut (and the people of Shu'ayb and others.(۱

These retributions are a living witness to the fact that Cod, the Just and Merciful is no. pleased with evil-doing and oppression and will give complete rewards for all deeds in another world. Generally, tile retributions of this world are a sample of the complete retributions for deeds in the other world. And anyone who takes notice of the rewards of this world will soon see that man is not left to himself, and will meet with an exact .reckoning in the next world for all his deeds and behaviour

It must be remembered that it

.See Surah Hud and elsewhere -۱

is sometimes necessary for the building and perfecting of righteous individuals that troubles and hardships should occur, and these should in no way be thought of as rewards. Thus, also, some evil-doers may not get the just reward they deserve for their deeds, but this is not a proof that they are subject to a special grace from God, or that they have been overlooked, for their punishment will be meted out to them in the .next world

About people being believers or unbelievers, and in description of what will be given to :the unbelievers in hell and the believers in heaven, it says

Then as for him who was insolent and preferred the life of the world, surely Hell shall" the refuge. But as for him who feared the station of his Lord and forbade the soul its (caprice, surely the Garden shall be the refuge." (۷۹: ۳۷

Whosoever does an evil deed shall be recompensed only with the like of it, but" whosoever does a righteous deed, be they male or female, believing - those shall (enter the Garden, therein provided without reckoning." (۴۰: ۴۰

The Qur'an explicitly states the difficulties of Resurrection and the severity of the .punishment so that people should fear Allah and do good

O men, fear your Lord! Surely the earthquake of the Hour is a mighty thing; or that" day when you behold it, every suckling woman shall neglect the child she has suckled, and every pregnant woman shall deposit her burden, and thou shalt see mankind

(drunk, yet they are not drunk. but Allah's chastisement is terrible." (۲۲: ۱-۲

And when the Blast shall sound, upon the day when a man shall flee from his brother," his mother, his father his consort, his sons, every man that day shall have business to

(suffice him." (۸۰: ۳۳-۳۶

The day that every soul shall find what it has done of good brought forward, and" what it has done of era, it shall wish if there were only a far space between it and that (day." (۳:۳۰

Hundreds more ayahs expound the subject of the Return and the reckoning of the Day of Resurrection. If these ayahs at considered with care and attention, it will transform man's behaviour in this world to such an extent that he will not uncle take a thing more without reckoning it and he will fear Allah. He will gather together .provisions for his eternal life here in this world, which is a kind of farm

Pure- hearted Muslims, out of fee' of the next world, will carefully weigh their acts and words ant even thoughts, they will keep the nights free of sleep, and devote themselves to worship, to supplicating Allah. They will not do things dictated by their pleasure, and spend the night and day, thinking how to improve themselves and the .community

Sa'sa'ah ibn Suhan said: "I was present in the mosque at Kufah for the morning prayer. Hazrat 'Ali, Amir al-Mu'minin prayed with us, and, after the salam he sat facing the qibla, engaged

himself in remembrance of Allah (dhikr), not looking at all to the right or to the left of himself, until the sun had risen. Then he turned to us and said: 'In the time of my beloved Prophet of Allah (S), there were people who were engaged in sajdah and ruku' in this night till the morning, and when it became light they were disheveled of hair and covered in dust, and their foreheads were marked with the effects of sajdah. When they remembered death, like trees whipped by the wind, they fell into great commotion and wept, soaking their clothes in their tears.' Then Hazrat 'Ali stood up, '".but he said: 'It would seem that those who have lived in forgetfulness

One day after the Prophet of Islam (S) had prayed the Morning Prayer in the mosque,

he saw a youth named Haritha who was dozing, he had become pale, emaciated and his eyes were sunken. The Prophet asked him how he felt. He said 'In a state of certainty." The Prophet was surprised at his answer and said: 'Every certainty has a "?reality. What is the reality of your certainty

He said: 'O Prophet! My certainty has made me depressed and steals sleep from my eyes, and makes me hot with thirst in the middle of the day. I renounce this world and all that is in it. Now it is as if I see the Resurrection taking place and the people coming to be reckoned. I also am among

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them, and I can see that one group is enjoying the blessings of heaven and are sitting on the heavenly thrones around them and are speaking to each other. And I can see that another group is being punished in the Fire; their cries for help and protection are loud, and it seems that right now the crackling of the flames of the Fire is resounding '.in my ears

The Prophet (S) told his companions: 'He is a slave whose heart Allah has filled with a brilliant faith.' Then he told the youth: 'Be watchful that this state does not leave you.' The youth said: 'O Prophet! Pray to Allah that I may be martyred in your service.' The Prophet prayed for his martyrdom, and it was not long before he attained his glory in .one of the wars along with other persons

Questions

?What has the Holy Prophet said man is created for .۱

?What did the Prophet say we must look forward to .۲

?What does Verse ۹۱ ch. ۳ say .۳

?On what basis does reason say resurrection is certain .۴

?What does God's wisdom require .۵

?Will everyone's account close after his/her death .۶

?What would be the meaning of Divine Justice without resurrection .۷

?What does verse ۲۱-۲۲ ch. ۲۵ say .۸

Can the worldly rewards and punishments be considered compatible to the good .۹
?deeds or crimes of the people

?What does verse ۹ ch. ۴ say .۱۰

?What does verse ۳۰ ch. ۴۲ say .۱۱

?What does verse ۶۳ ch. ۲۴ say .۱۲

What does verse ۱۱ .۱۳

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?ch. ۱۳ say

?Did any of the enemies of the prophet receive punishment in this world .۱۴

?What is worldly punishment in relation to those of the next life .۱۵

?What for are the worldly troubles .۱۶

?What does verse ۳۷ ch ۷۹ say .۱۷

?What does verse ۴۰ ch. ۴۰ say .۱۸

?What do verse ۱-۲ ch. ۲۲ say .۱۹

?What do verse ۳۳-۳۶ ch. ۸۰ say .۲۰

?What does verse ۳۰ ch. ۳ say .۲۱

?What would an understanding of these verses do to man .۲۲

?What did Sa’sa’ah experience in the Mosque of Kufa one morning .۲۳

?What did the Holy Prophet ask Haritha one morning .۲۴

?What was his answer to the Prophet and how was his physical condition .۲۵

?What did the Prophet say to the others about him .۲۶

Lesson ۳۰: After Death

Death

That which does not die and will never die is Allah. We, slaves, will one day eventually .leave this world

The setting of the sun each day is a poetical metaphor for our passing away. How good it is, if we meet with another day, just like the sun, beaming and bright on the horizon of the Resurrection. This is important for the sunset is inevitable, death is a .reality which, like it or not, must happen

What we must think about is what after death will happen to us? Will we become nothing? Will everyone's life merely “end in death”? Or will we “remain”, and if so, ?what will our “remaining” be like

,Those who do not believe in Cod consider death to be the becoming nothing of man

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and life just limited to one or two days. They say that everyone's turn is short- lived. But those who are bled in revelation are completely opposed to this view, and they say that man is immortal and that death is just a ladder leading to the world of .purgatory and Resurrection, which is the everlasting resting-place

(Purgatory (Barzakh

According to clear ayahs of the Qur'an and many hadiths from the leaders of Islam, death is not the becoming nothing of man. The human spirit, after death, remains, and

experiences blessings or torment up to the time of the turmoil of Resurrection. This period from death to Resurrection is called Barzakh. The life of Barzakh is a real :existence, not imaginary or illusory. Allah says

Count not those who were slain in the way of Allah as dead, but rather living with" (their Lord, being Sistine rejoicing in the bounty which Allah has given them".(٣:١۶٩-١٧٠

It is clear that if the life were not real, the phrase "living with their Lord, being .sustained" would be meaningless

Similarly in the case of the man of Ya-Sin, the believer, who advised his people to :follow the Messenger of 'Isa, but they did not and killed him, the Qur'an says

It was said: 'Enter Paradise!' He said: 'Ah, would that my people had knowledge that" (my Lord has forgiven me, and that he has placed me among the honored." (٣۶:٢۶-٢٧

It is evident that the meaning of Paradise in this ayah is the purgatory of Barzakh which people of faith benefit

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.from in between death and the Resurrection

The Qur'an said of the unbelievers and those who, till the moment of death, continue :in unacceptable ways

Till, when death comes to one of them, he says 'My Lord return me; haply I shall do" (righteousness in that which I forsook." (٢٣: ٩٩

.But their wish is unfulfilled, and they are told

Nay, it is but a word he speaks, are there, behind them, barrier until the day that they" (shall be raised up." (٢٣: ١٠٠

Here is a true story about this. The tumult of the battle of Badr had just died down and the enemy fled away. The dead remained. Some of the dead who were unbelievers

were dumped in a well. The Prophet (S) came to the head of the well and said to the dead: "O ye unbelievers! You were the accomplices of evil. You drove the Prophet of Allah from his home, and joined together in war against him. Now I have seen the promise of my God fulfilled. Have you also seen the promise of your god proved true?"

On hearing these words, 'Umar said: "O Prophet, how can you speak with these who are no more than bodies without spirits?"

Enough!" said the Prophet, "I swear by Allah that you can hear no better than they" can. Just as I got up and turned away from them, the angels of torment came to beat them with iron clubs."

Amir al-mu'minin 'Ali (a.s.), too, was searching among the dead after the battle of Jamal

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for the body of Ka'b ibn Surah. Ka'b had been appointed in his life-time to be judge of Basrah, and had been judge there till the end of the Caliphate of 'Uthman. In the battle of Jamal he hung a Qur'an round his neck and together with the family and offspring of the Prophet went to the Imam's battle and was killed. After he had found the body, the Imam (a.s.) gave the command to sit him up, and addressed him: "O Ka'b, I have seen the promise of Allah fulfilled. Have you, too seen it fulfilled?"

Then he ordered the body to be laid down; then he did the same with the body of Talhah. So someone asked him: "What is the use of doing that? They cannot hear your words."

I swear by Allah," We said, "that they heard both my remarks, just as did the" deadbeat Badr with the Prophet."

Also Habbah al-'Arni said "I went with Amir al-mu'minin 'Ali (a.s.) to Wadi as-Salam. The latter stood and it seemed that he spoke with some people. I stood too but became tired, so I sat down, but I was still tired. I got up and sat down again. Still I was tired so I stood up to get my cloak and asked 'Ali if he would allow me to put my

cloak down so that he could sit down for a while. I told him I was afraid he might be .tired from standing too much

O Habbah." he said, "this"

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standing up gives no discomfort, because I am busy with speaking familiarly with the .dead." "Are they like this," I asked

Yes, if the veil was taken away from your eyes you would see that groups of the dead" ".are sitting speaking to one another

.Are they bodies or spirits?" I asked"

Spirits. The faithful, in all comes of the world, do not die unless an order reaches" them. In Wadi as-Salam, here and there are chambers of the Garden of Eden, and the ".highest heavens where the spirits of the believers gathered from far and near

The Questioning in the Grave

It can be seen from many hadiths that the spirit has a very special relation with the .body in the grave, although the nature of this relation is not clear

The sixth Imam, Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.) said: "Those who deny the questioning in the ".(grave are not from our party (Shi'a

When the dead people is laid in the grave, the angels of the questioning present themselves and ask him about his din, his beliefs and his deeds. If the individual has faith and has done good, he joins the believers; if not, he joins the unbelievers and evil-doers. And everyone will pass the period in Barzakh until the Resurrection with .their respective group

Shaykh Saduq - may the mercy of Allah be with him - writes in his Risalah al-I'tiqadat: "In our opinion, the questioning in the grave is a truth, and he who answers rightly will benefit in the grave from comfort and blessings, and in the next

world from the Garden. He who cannot answer rightly will see torment in the grave, ".and in the Resurrection he will go to the Fire

The fourth Imam (a.s.) used to exhort people every Friday in the Mosque of the Prophet (S), saying: "O People, prefer abstinence and virtuousness. Your return will be to Allah. Each person who has done good here, will be advanced there, and each person who has done impure deeds and wishes that a great distance be put between .him and his deeds, Allah will put the fear of your torment into you

Alas, O sons of Adam! What neglectfulness! But they are not neglectful. Death is" quicker than anything that tries to overtake it, and it will swallow you. And when it finds you out, it will be as it is said when it overtakes you, and the angel of death will recover your spirit from you and you will rise alone in the chamber (the grave), and .the angel of questioning will come in to you for questions and a hard examination

The first question will be about your God whom you worshipped, and about your" Prophet who was sent to you, and about your din which you followed, and about your Book which you believed in and read, and about your Imams whose wilayat you accepted and whose orders you carried out. Then they will ask about the reckoning of your life, what way you went, and about your property and wealth, where you disposed of

it and how you spent it. So be careful, and after the questions be ready with your !answer

If you are with faith, virtuous, know yourself well and follow the truthful leaders; and" a friend of the friends of Allah, Allah will make your tongue speak the truth, and He will give you the good news of the Garden and your happiness. The angels will come before you with gifts and sustenance. Otherwise your tongue will fall to stammering and you will not reply after the questions, and He will make you the promise of the

Fire, and the angels will bring torment before you with the entertainment of boiling water and fire."

The Torment of the Grave

Man's placing in Barzakh is intimately connected with his deeds in this world. For those who are virtuous of soul, Barzakh will be a sample of Heaven, and they will see their good deeds reflected in beauty and soft to the eye. Hazrat Imam Hasan 'Askari (a.s.) said: "When a believer dies, six beautiful youths will hurry with him to his grave, one of them more fragrant and more beautiful than all the others. On his right, on his left, above him and below him and in front of him and behind him they will stand. Then the most beautiful of them will ask: "Who are you all." The one standing on the right will say: 'I am prayer'; the one on the left: 'I am zakat'. The one standing in front will say: 'I am fasting'; the one

behind: 'I am hajj and 'umrah.'. The one at his feet will say: 'I am the goodness which he did to his brothers.' Then all will ask of the most beautiful: 'You, yourself, who are you, who is more perfect?"

"'I am walayat", he will say, "and love of the Household of Muhammad (S)."'

However on those who had polluted the surface of the earth with unbelief, impurity and indecent acts, constraint and darkness will fall when they enter the grave, and their angel of tomment will inflict suffering on them.

The Prophet of Islam (S) was following the funeral procession of one of the Ansars; and when he had been buried, he sat down on his grave and lowered his head, saying: "O Allah, I seek refuge from the torments of the grave!"

The questioning of the grave and its torments are not necessarily to be perceived by the physical eye. That power by which the prophets, the Imams, the pure ones and the righteous ones spoke, is enough, and must be accepted.

Mulla Muhsin Fayz says: “These (physical) eyes are not competent to see what happens in the world of Malakut, and what happens in the next world and in Barzakh is the business of Malakut. Did not the companions of the Prophet (S) believe in the descent of Jibra'il, although they could not see him? So also, the torment of the grave is an affair of Malakut, and if this is to be perceived, another sense is necessary of which all are

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”.deprived save the prophets and the walls of Allah

The Remembrance of Death

Some people run away from the remembrance of death, and do not give way to thoughts about it. It is as if they have drunk the water of eternity, and think to remain in this world forever. These people are drunk from the wine of neglectfulness. For they know but do not accept that the only thing that is eternal and will not die is Allah. From the results of their neglectfulness of death, they will pass their lives aimlessly. They do not think to reform themselves; their time is spent like the hands of a clock, turning round and round, and how often will they be polluted with dreadful sins. There .is not so much difference between their lives and the lives of animals

The manner of their behavior is completely the contrary of the way of acting of the chosen ones of Allah. The Prophet of Islam (S) said: “Remember death very often, so that it may purify you from sins and decrease attachment to a world which is not an ”.introduction to the betterment of the spirit

On the other hand, there are others who remember death much, following the command of the leaders of the din - may Allah bless them - and profit from every occasion that comes their way for the Day of Resurrection. Their world is a world of introduction to the ultimate world. Their search is not for personal benefit and their own desires. From their

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view the world does not have so much value that they will dirty their hands and clothes with urine and treachery to get it. Rather they are busy with work and pursuits and service in society, so that they will completely take the benefit from this life to the .life of the Resurrection

They do not fear death. The greatest example is Amir al-Mu'minin, 'Ali (a s.), whose first words when the sword of the enemy fell to martyr him were: “I swear by Allah, I ”!have been delivered

Truly, the leaving of the constraints of this world and going to eternity of the everlasting world is an ease and a salvation, but only for those who follow the way of Hazrat 'Ali (a.s.) to polity in the straightened circumstances of this life, and who are occupied with piety in their spirits and souls and thoughts, and with worship and .slavery to Allah, and with service to mankind

”?Abu Dharr al-Ghifari was asked: “Why are we disgusted with death

You have taken up residence in this world,” he replied, “but ruined your next world. So“ ”.you do not desire to migrate from your home to the place of ruin

”?The Prophet of Islam (S) said: “Do you all wish to go to the Garden

.Yes,” they all said“

So cut short your cravings, and always keep death in sight, since you must always be“ ”.shameful before Allah

To remember those near to you when they met death, and occasional visits to graveyards and the tombs of believers will

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.result in remembrance of death and guidance

The Garden

But the godlearing shall be amongst gardens and fountains: 'Enter you them, in“

peace and security!' We shall strip away all rancour that is in their breasts; as brothers they shall be upon couches set face to face; no fatigue there shall suite them, neither (shall they be driven forth from there." (۱۵: ۴۵-۴۸

The Outstripped (al-Sabiqun), those are they brought nigh the Throne, in the" Gardens of Delight (a throng of the ancients but how few of the laterfolk) upon clcrse-wrought couches reclining upon them, set face to face, immortal youths going round about them with goblets, and ewers, and a cup from a spring (no brows throbbing, no intoxication) and such fruits as they choose, and such flesh offewl as they desire, and wide-eyed hours as the likeness of hidden pearls, a recompense for that they (laboured." (۵۶: ۱۰-۲۴

Except for Allah's sincere slaves; for them awaits a known provision, fruits - and they" high-honoured in the Gardens of Bliss upon couches, set face to face, a cup from a spring being passed round to them, white, a delight to the drinkers, wherein no sickness is, neither intoxication; and with them wide-eyed maidens restraining their (glances as if they were hidden pearls." (۳۷: ۳۹-۴۷

The dwellers in the Garden are talking to one another "One of them says, 'I had a comrade who wouldsay, "Are you a confrmer? What, when we are dead and become ,dust and Barnes, shall we indeed be requitted?" He says

Are you looking down?' Then he looks. and sees him in the midst of Hell. He says, 'By' Allah, wellnigh thou didst destroy me; But for my Lord's blessing, I was one of the arraigned. What, do we then not die except for our first death, and are we not chastised? This is indeed the mighty triumph and for the like of this let the workers (work." (۳۷: ۵۰-۶۱

Hell

Hell is the place of the unbelievers and the sinners. Their torment and torture cannot be compared to the torments of this world. Allah gives us a picture of the horror of it in :the Qur'an

Surley those who disbelieved in Our signs - We shall certainly roast them at a Fire; as" often as their skins are wholly burned, We shall give them in exchange other skins, (that they may taste the chastisement. Surely Allh is All-might, All-wise." (۴: ۵۶

As for the unbelievers, for them garments of fire shall be cut, and there shall be" poured over their heads boiling water whereby whatsoever is in their bellies and their skins shall be melted; for them await hooked iron rods; as often as they desire in their anguish to come forth from it, they shall be restored into it, and 'Taste the (chastisement of the burning!'" (۲۲: ۱۹-۲۳

And those who are in the Fire will say to the keeper of Gehema, 'Call on your Lord, to lighten for us one day of the chastisement!' They shall say, 'Did not your Messengers bring you

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the clear signs?' They shall say, 'Yes, indeed ' They shall say, 'Then do you call?' But (the calling of the believer is only in error." (۴۰: ۴۹-۵۰

Behold, Gehema has become an ambush, for the insolent a resort, therein to tarry" for ages, tasking therein neither coolness nor drink save boiling water and pus for a (suitable recompense." (۷۸: ۲۱-۲۳

Woe unto every backbiter, slanderer, who has gathered riches and counted them" over thinking his riches have made him immortal! No indeed; he shall be thrust into the Crusher; and what shall teach thee what is the Crusher? The Fire of Allah kindled (roaring over the hearts covered down upon them, in columns outstretched." (۱۰۴: ۱-۹

:Amir al-mu'minin,'Ali (a.s.) said

Know that the dedicate skin of your body cannot tolerate or bear the fire of Hell. So" pity yourselves! You who have experienced the discomforts of this world, and who know your own incapabilities, and who have seen how when a thorn enters your foot and makes it septic, the wamm stones of the ground bum it, you take the pain. So how will it be when you are between two walls of fire, when you lie on stone" and your

.companion is Satan

O those who are slaves of Allah; remember Allah, remember Allah! While you are“ well, before you become ill, while you have the opportunity, before you become constrained, strive to be free of the fire of Hell, before the way of salvation becomes impossible for you. Give yourself to the

way of Allah with eyes clear of sleep, and your stomachs empty (i.e. fasting). Walk in His path; give away your possessions in His path; use your bodies to the benefit of (your spirit; being sparing.” (۱

(Intercession (ash–Shafa'ah

One of the dear matters in the Qur'an, and also in many hadiths, is the matter of .intercession. Intercession as intervention for the pardoning of someone's sins

This intermediation, which takes place by the permission of Allah in some sins and in the case of some sinners, is based on the expensive mercy and deep kindness of .Allah, and is a consequence of the hope of believers

If one believes and obtains worthiness to be forgiven and pardoned, and does not fall back again from these high positions, although one was not able to repent in this world, Allah will grant one His great Forgiveness by the means of intercession. In the Resurrection, the Prophets, the Prophet of Islam and the Pure Imams – may Allah bless them all and grant them peace –will, with the permission of Allah, intercede with Him for some sins. Of course, the sins of some persons will be so grave that they cannot merit intercession until they have met with the torment But some sins are such :that the will be completely removed by intercession. Thus a hadith says

Our intercession, the intercession of the Household of the Prophet is not the lot of“ ”.those who take prayer to be a frivolity

Questions

,What is it that will certainly, like it or not

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Nahjul Balaghah -۱

?happen

?If so then what must we think and be concerned about

?What is purgatory

?What do verses of the Holy Qur'an say about it

?What does verse ۱۰۰ ch. ۲۳ say

?To who did the Prophet speak

?Who said it is no use to speak to the dead

?What was the Holy Prophets answer

?To whose dead body did Imam speak

?In what position was the dead body kept and what did Imam Ali say

?What did Habbah al-Ami experience

?What were the answers of Imam Ali to Habbah's questions

?Who lived in Wadi as-Salem according to Imam Ali

?What did the sixth say about those who deny questions in the grave

?What has Shaykh Sadiq said in his book about the questions in the grave

?What has the fourth Imam Said people to do every Friday

?What will happen If you are with faith and if you are without faith

What will happen to people in barzakh, if they are of good faith and deeds and if they ?are not so

?Who do the six youths do to a person of good faith and deeds

?What do they say to each other

??What did the Holy Prophet do and say on the grave of the man who just died

?What kind of life do people who neglect death live

?What kind of life does people who are mindful of death live

?Who is the most prominent of the people who are mindful of death

?What were the first words of Imam Ali when death approached him

?What did the Holy Prophet say about the Gardens

What does verses ۴۵-۴۸ ch. ۱۵ say about the

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?Gardens

?What do verses ۱۰-۲۴ say about the Garden

?What does verse ۴۰-۴۸ say

?What does verse ۵۰-۶۱ ch. ۳۷ say

?What does verse ۵۶ ch. ۴ say

?What do verse ۱۹-۲۲ ch. ۲۲ say

?What do verse ۲۱-۲۵ ch. ۲۸ say

?What do verses ۱-۹ ch. ۱۰۴ say

?What has Imam Ali said about fire and suffering

?What is intercession

?Who will be able to intercede for others before God

?Who will not be able to benefit from the intercession of Ahlul Bayt

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About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ
?Are those who know equal to those who do not know
al-Zumar: ۹

:Introduction
Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ۲۰۰۷, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto
Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field
and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated

generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

avoiding parallel working-

merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

:Other activities of the institute

Publication of books, booklets and other editions-

Holding book reading competitions-

Producing virtual, three dimensional exhibitions, panoramas of religious and tourism- places

.Producing animations, computer games and etc-

Launching the website with this address: www.ghaemiyeh.com-

Fabricatingdramatic and speech works-

Launching the system of answering religious, ethical and doctrinal questions-

Designing systems of accounting, media and mobile, automatic and handy systems,- web kiosks

Holding virtual educational courses for the public-

Holding virtual teacher-training courses-

Producing thousands of research software in three languages (Persian, Arabic and-

English) which can be performed in computers, tablets and cellphones and available and downloadable with eight international formats: JAVA, ANDROID, EPUB, CHM, PDF, HTML, CHM, GHB on the website

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:Appreciation

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:Address of the central office

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